PBASE

Magazine

July
2006

Cambridge in Color

Featuring PBase Photographer
Sean McHugh

Photojournalist Extraordinaire

David Burnett

Plus

The Art of Sharpening
The Woodabe Tribes of Africa
From Passion to Profession
Oye! Australia
The Aurora Hunter
Reality Video-Journalism

ISSUE 6 | JULY | 2006

PBASE.com MAGAZINE

A ROOM HUNG WITH PICTURES IS A ROOM HUNG WITH THOUGHTS.
-SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

Editorial Notes

COVER PHOTO BY SEAN MCHUGH
DESIGN BY GARY BLANCHETTE

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From around the world, we would like to welcome you to the sixth edition of PBase Magazine! The editorial team always worries when an issue comes out, how are we going to top it with the next magazine? Our track record with learning from our previous magazines and working harder has made each magazine special and worth reading.

As with every issue, this one brings a wide aray of talents from, literally, around the world. The "tour de world" takes off in America's East Cost. Arjun (from Maryland) and myself (from right outside New York City) brainstorm new ideas for the issue and quickly get to work.

This issue brings us Bud Kuenzli who comes from the North Pole, Alaska. Brrr! Simply writing the words makes me shiver! His passion is Aurora Photography and he writes an extraordinary essay on it. Next we fly west and land in Australia. Here, Sheila Smart brings the Aboriginies and digaridoo's to life with gorgeous photography and notes about her culture. Sheila is the second person to pen our latest series: Culture Cauldron. Sean McHugh is a recent graduate of Cambridge University. While he may have studied chemical engineering, his heart is in photography and his photographs and answers to our questions are this issue's PBase Photog. Molly Jamison, a new PBase.com administrator, has written in our PBase Corner and we hope she will continue with her great work for many more issues to come!

Finally, in our Pro Interview, we decided to focus on the topic of photojournalism. PBase Magazine goes one-on-one with David Burnett, a world renowned photojournalist who has covered major world events all around the world (from Afghanistan to the Olympics to presidential campaigns) and whose photographs have been seen in a range of magazines including *Time* and *Fortune* (front cover photo of Bill Gates). American Photo magazine recently named Burnett one of the "100 Most Important People in Photography." As an added bonus, we spoke to video-journalist Tony Zumbado. In NBC News exclusive footage, Tony used his camera to show the world and the American government the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans. He tells us his story and thoughts about the hard decisions surrounding photojournalism, being trampled by authorities and how his start in still photography helped him become one of the best video-journalists in America.

In other news, we would really like to improve our blog (web log) and update it on a regular basis. If anyone has an idea on what we could add, please let us know by emailing us and placing "Blog" in the title.

Of course, much thanks to our phenomenal team, Wanda, Gary and Larena, who are so dedicated to this magazine.

Our next issue is coming out September 11, 2006. We hope you enjoy issue number six and please email us (magazine@pbase.com) with your thoughts on the magazine. We love to hear from our readers and if you would like to contribute, please contact us. Also make sure to purchase your very own PBase Magazine merchandise from our store (http://www.pbase.com/magazine/buy) or donate an amount here: http://www.pbase.com/magazine/donation.

In conclusion, please spread the word to all of your friends and family about our magazine! Print out the magazine and place a copy on your coffee table or around your office. You can also place our link (www.pbase.com/magazine) in your profiles or email it to those who you think would be interested (or not)!

Thanks and enjoy!

~ Eric Kuhn
www.pbase.com/ejkphoto

PBASE PHOTOG: Sean McHugh

Sean is a relative newcomer to photography, having developed this hobby while transitioning from studies in southern California to Cambridge, England. The stark difference in climate and daylight hours led him to initially focus on night and low-light photography—much of which consists of exposures of 30 seconds or more. His photographic work has been featured in multiple Cambridge-affiliated calendars and Christmas cards, and his online tutorials have been used as instructional tools for several Universities that teach digital imaging. Sean is actually a scientist by training, having recently completed his degree from Cambridge in Chemical Engineering on reactive flow in multiphase plumes (with applications to carbon dioxide sequestration, volcanic eruptions and storm cloud growth).

PBase Magazine: Given a choice of career between Chemical Engineering (which you are currently pursuing) and Photography, which would you choose and why?

Sean: Tough one. I often think of photography like many think of exercise, such as going for a jog each day after work. Exercise is often an entirely separate activity from one's line of work, and to me, helps improve focus during work because it acts as a mental outlet. This is at least my current approach; maybe much later on I would consider photography full-time, if that were indeed a possibility.

Kings Moon

PBM: What is it in Cambridge that makes it one of your favourite photographic themes?

I think the sense of history, combined with its architectural character and appropriately atmospheric lighting and weather. To me, the combination of still water, old bridges, fog and willows can become just magical. This is not to say that it is always this photogenic, that is for sure.

Much of the time Cambridge light is gray and flat, with a gentle misting rain—conditions hardly ideal for photography. I think it is actually this seemingly constant day to day weather, combined with its unique location and character, that is what makes those moments of breakthrough light that much more exceptional and moving. These times include dramatic and uneven light as it breaks through cloud cover, post-thunderstorm rainbows, or the eerie light from a full moon enhancing the appearance of fog over the river Cam. For me at least, night and low-light conditions are what I remember Cambridge for, even though I feel that these are conditions under which it is perhaps the least photographed. In today's climate, where photography is done with greater ease, and with photographers therefore penetrating to more locations and events worldwide, I feel that Cambridge's atmosphere affords a chance to provide a unique contribution to this ever-increasing spectrum of photographic art.

PBM: All of your photographs in that gallery seem to be perfectly exposed and silky smooth. Being an avid nightscape enthusiast myself, I often find that one needs to spend quite a bit of time in workflow, blending different exposures and image stacking. Does any of this form a part of your workflow? If so, would you please throw some light on your process for our readers.

Thank you. Ideally, as much work as possible is performed before the exposure, but as a nightscape photographer yourself, I am sure you have come to realize that this is just not possible all the time.

Through the Willows

PROFILE

NAME: SEAN MCHUGH

WEBSITE: HTTP://WWW.CAMBRIDGEINCOLOUR.COM

FROM: USA

YEARS AS PHOTOGRAPHER: 4+

PHOTOGRAPHY STYLE: NIGHTSCAPE AND LOW-LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY

EQUIPMENT: CANON EOS 5D + ASSORTMENT OF LENSES AND GADGETS

MCHUGH QUIPS:

"I often think of photography like many think of exercise, such as going for a jog each day after work. Exercise is often an entirely separate activity from one's line of work, and to me, helps improve focus during work because it acts as a mental outlet."

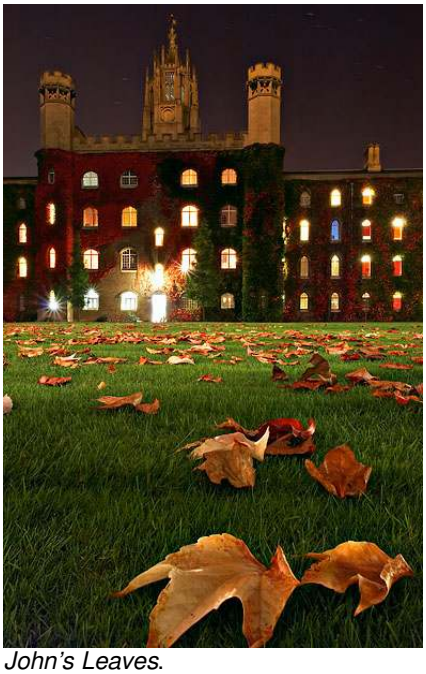
Queen's Trees

Flower Bench

Nearly every night photograph requires shooting in RAW mode, subsequent white balance adjustments, levels and sharpening (once the image has been resized appropriately for print).

Some photographs require a bit more, which may include panoramic stitching or some combination of graduated neutral density (GND) filters. Unlike in daytime/sunset photographs, which are ideally suited for linear GND filters (which gradually transition from letting in more light from the darker ground and less from the brighter sky), night photographs often have more complex lighting geometries.

Photographs of street lights, for example, may require a radially blended neutral density filter (similar to what some large format photographers would use to correct for lens vignetting). This radial filter would be arranged such that it lets in less light closer to the light source, and progressively more light further from that source (so as to provide a more balanced exposure throughout). This helps to both increase usable dynamic range, while also maintaining local contrast. These GND's can be applied either traditionally with physical filters, or through multiple exposures which are later combined digitally; both yield similar results



John's Leaves.

PBM: Which lens and body combination do you find yourself shooting most often?

When I was using the 1.6X crop factor Canon cameras (300D, 10D and 20D), I found that my Canon 17-40 f/4L was by far the most used lens. With my 5D, I am finding that the 24-105 f/4L IS is an amazingly versatile lens on a full frame camera. I recently went on a day hike in Yosemite, brought nothing but this lens, and never felt too limited. I have also found that my Canon 70-200 f/2.8 IS is much more useful on the 5D, because on a 1.6X camera I had found that I was almost always zooming out all the way (at 70 mm), and never really used it fully zoomed (at 200 mm). As I have progressively acquired more equipment, I have always been wary of letting the technical side of taking photographs distract from one's ability to do what they were originally intended for: creating more moving photographs by enabling greater artistic flexibility.

Unwilling Participants

PBM: What is your opinion on the 'focusing at hyperfocal distance' concept ? Let me ask you the question that every new user asks when he looks at a perfectly focused landscape picture with a tack sharp near and far point (like http://www.pbase.com/compuminus/image/27515923) : "Where did you focus?"

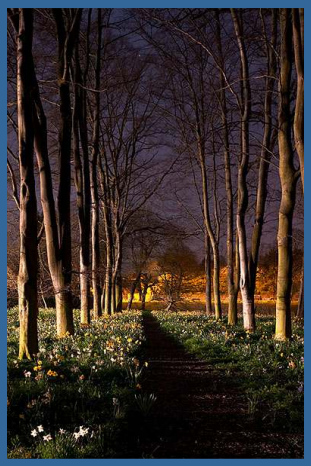
I think that one has to consider the distribution and type of subject matter. For landscape scenes where one wishes to capture both foreground foliage and background mountains, I find that the traditional hyperfocal distance is too close. This is because objects at infinity (such as the background mountains) often have to be critically sharp, but the concept of hyperfocal distance places these mountains at the extreme edge of the depth of field (causing them to just barely fit the definition of sharp). If there are no visible objects "at infinity," or if these do not have fine texture detail (such as fog-enshrouded mountains), then one can often get away with focusing at or closer than the hyperfocal distance.

In the photo of the "Mathematical Bridge," I probably focused near the third closest cluster of flowers. For photos like this, sharpness is often limited not by use of the hyperfocal distance, but instead by ensuring minimal wind-induced movement during the exposure. I therefore took a series of maybe 5 shots with identical compositions, and chose the one where movement was minimized. While this may seem too time-consuming, it actually made a substantial difference. Finally, the camera was not perpendicular to the ground, and therefore the concept of hyperfocal distance no longer becomes accurate. Since the camera was slanted downwards by a significant amount, this also helped to increase the depth of field since it made the focal plane more closely align with the subject matter. This was surely not a huge effect, but it certainly helped.

PBM: You mention that you are part of the Cambridge University Photographic Society. How often does this group meet up and what activities take place?

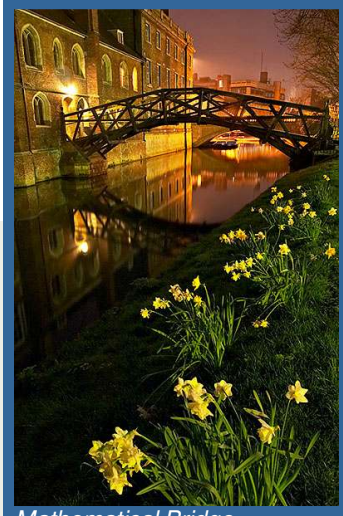
This society primarily serves to organize talks by well-known guest photographers, and to help organize workshops for Cambridge students who are just beginning to explore their passion for

[on night photography:] "… Ideally, as much work as possible is performed before the exposure, but […] I am sure you have come to realize that this is just not possible all the time. "



Spring Bridge

In the photo of the "Mathematical Bridge," I probably focused near the third closest cluster of flowers. For photos like this, sharpness is often limited not by use of the hyperfocal distance, but instead by ensuring minimal wind-induced movement during the exposure. I therefore took a series of maybe 5 shots with identical compositions, and chose the one where movement was minimized"



Mathematical Bridge

photography. Workshops are often every other week during term time, and guest speakers can vary from once every month or two to once a week, depending on how ambitious the student officers happen to be. We also organize competitions and subsequent exhibitions where students can earn prizes and display their work. This is a relatively new society, so it is definitely still in its formative years, with new photographic possibilities open for future years.

Bodley's Court

PBM: Do you have a 'role model' in photography?

There are so many accomplished photographers these days that sometimes it is hard to keep track of them all. People that immediately come to mind are Galen Rowell, Charlie Waite, Joe Cornish and Frans Lanting. I also think that I often look up to particular pictures even more than entire works from a particular photographer. There is a surprisingly large amount of spectacular photographs out there which have been taken by hobbyists, even if each of these hobbyists does not necessarily have a complete set of photographs about a particular concept, or if the rest of their collection are not necessarily of the same standard. I think that anybody who spends some time browsing through the thousands of artists viewable online, such as here on PBase, could agree that they often see shots which just blow them away. Despite their clear potential, most of these people may just not have had the time to fully develop their talent, broaden their portfolio or even to fully appreciate what they have captured.

PBM: In your website, you mention that you now own a Canon 5D. Your PBase galleries show several images as taken from Canon 300D. What are the advantages that you found of the 5D over the 300D for the type of photos that you take?

Lower noise levels, and a significantly larger viewfinder and LCD preview screen. However, in nightscape photography, the noise level decrease with the 5D is not as significant as one might expect since it also requires stopping the lens down more in order to achieve a similar depth of field. In order to avoid prohibitively long exposure times, the 5D therefore often requires a higher ISO speed in order to compensate for the decrease in light from a smaller aperture. On the other hand, the larger viewfinder is certainly an advantage that is without trade-offs. This is pretty dramatic when one is trying to frame a photograph with minimal light, or with a lens which does not have a large maximum aperture (such as the 17-40 f/4L). I also sometimes find it beneficial that the 300D crops out the outer portions of the incoming light (from a full-frame 35 mm lens), allowing for greater image quality and less vignetting at the edges of the frame. Ultimately though, it all comes down to artistic flexibility, which I feel that the 5D provides through its greater range of depth of field options and higher resolution sensor (allowing for more cropping for a given print size, or of course sharper prints).

PBM: This question is dedicated to our gadget geek readers: Which is the first camera you ever owned and what was the 'succession line' since then?

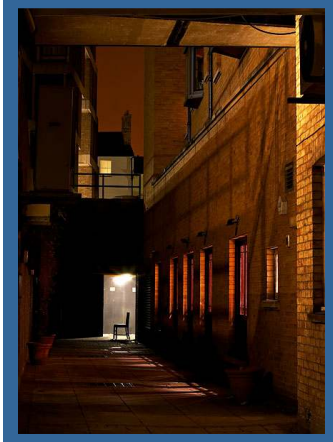
The only film cameras I ever used were not my own, so these will not be included. My first digital was the Epson PhotoPC 800, which was a 1.9 megapixel camera that frankly took horrible photos compared to any of today's cameras. The images were very noisy, and had horrible sharpening artifacts that could not be disabled. I then used a Canon PowerShot G3, which helped me immensely with improving my skills with composition, due to the flip-out LCD preview screen. My first SLR digital was then the Canon EOS 300D, which rapidly progressed to the 10D, then 20D, and now I am using the 5D. Hopefully this will be all I will use for a while, or that I will never need another camera again. Famous last words, or so I am told.

PBM: It looks like you use a tripod for many of your Cambridge shots. Which tripod do you use?

I started using the aluminum Velbon EFL-4A, which was a remarkably portable and reasonably stable tripod for its very low price. This tripod became somewhat whobbly in the wind, in addition to becoming stingingly cold during winter use. I then moved to (and continue to use) the Gitzo 1228 with a Markins M-10 ball head. I find that the carbon fiber tripod is more than stable enough, and definitely keeps my hands warmer in the winter (even with gloves).

SNIPPETS:

"There are so many accomplished photographers these days that sometimes it is hard to keep track of them all. People that immediately come to mind are Galen Rowell, Charlie Waite, Joe Cornish and Frans Lanting. I also think that I often look up to particular pictures even more than entire works from a particular photographer"



Take a Seat

Window Light

PBM: Would you describe for us, one of your most challenging photo shoots, what the challenge was and how you overcame it?

I believe this would have to be a commission that I worked on for an art museum, within their room designed to showcase modern art—primarily in the form of painted art. In person, this room was quite striking, while at the same time most photographs of this room appeared flat and empty. This was particularly difficult because the lighting options were limited, and the room geometry was square with white walls. Furthermore, select regions of the wall space could not be included within the photograph because these were occupied by paintings which were not allowed to be included in any printed photograph. I therefore had limited locations from which I could frame my image, and less control over light—two tools which are often critical for a photographer.

Since the requested end result required a series of photographs from the same room, different approaches were used for each photo in order to overcome the room's shortcomings. Perhaps the most effective was to use a wide angle lens, along with using its tilt/shift feature, to exaggerate perspective and draw the viewer's attention towards the room's architectural assets: its grid-based roof beams and textured hardwood floor. Lighting was improved my making use of uneven natural light, which was resulted from my waiting for when incoming light was affected by partial cloud cover.

PBM: Have you experimented in other areas of photography (like Portraits etc.)?

I primarily experimented with event and interior architectural photography. However, these are by far the minority of my photos since I have found that when trying to balance the hobby of photography with academic research, I am most effective when I concentrate on just one area.

PBM: If there is one area that you would like to improve upon, what would it be?

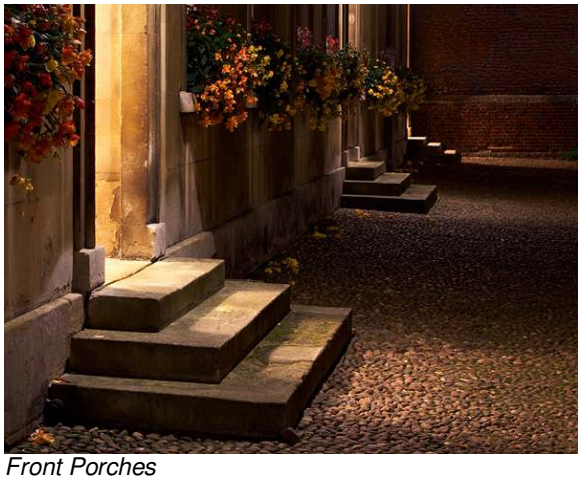
The ability to think clearly and quickly during conditions which present an exciting compositional or lighting opportunity. I often find that my best shoots are not necessarily when I find the best light, but instead may be one drama notch below this, because I slow my photography down and think it through more. Sometimes when that rare combination of lighting and subject matter aligns for seconds to minutes, I get so excited that I turn into almost a point and shoot photographer. I guess this handicap is just one of those things where my ability to overcome it keeps improving with time.

PBM: What advice would you have for our readers who would love to 'shoot like you do'?

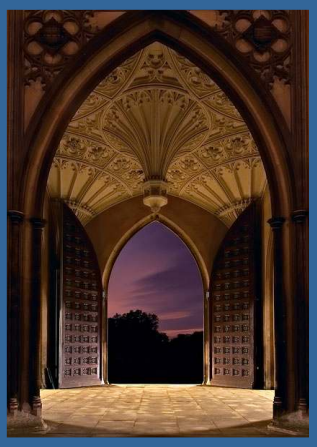
Develop extreme patience, and an intuition for what light sources and arrangements contribute to a well-exposed and balanced night photograph. Night and low-light photography is certainly not fast-paced sports photography, to say the least. Photographs requiring extreme depth of field can take upwards of two minutes in exposure time alone, and this excludes careful planning, situations where a panorama is being made, or when multiple exposures may be required to balance extreme lighting. People are often amazed when they see that, depending on the subject, it can easily require around an hour to photograph just one subject at night.

Developing an intuition for what lighting works well in a night shot really requires just a lot of in-field experimentation. In other words, do not be afraid to take lots and lots of bad shots. After a while you will notice that some light sources contribute to greenish color casts, while others create orangish ones, and some light may even make achieving a properly color balanced shot impractical. Experience with manually setting the photo's white balance and shooting in RAW mode are therefore also critical.

Soft Darkness



Front Porches



Stone Curves

Clare College, Cambridge

Trinity Lane

Please email your comments and suggestions to magazine@pbase.com

PRO-CORNER: David Burnett

David Burnett is a photojournalist with more than 4 decades of experience covering the news and tempo of our age. His site includes pictures from many of the major events, and considerably lesser ones of the last 35 years. In February of 2006, he was again awarded several major awards for work done in the past year: First Place in Presidential category in the White House News Photographers' Association annual Eyes of History; and first place in Best of Photojournalism for a Portrait of Joe Wilson and Valerie Plame. In a recent issue of American Photo magazine Burnett was named one of the "100 Most Important People in Photography." On his site are images of war, politics, the famous, the infamous, and the *un*famous. The *Measures of Time* sections are the images from the exhibit now touring the country. The *Too Close* section is an exhibit that will be held in Berlin in the summer.

PBase Magazine: Can you start by telling us a little bit about the two exhibits you have now touring the country?

Burnett: I have had a show called "Measures of Time" traveling the past three years, and it has been to eleven venues so far, primarily schools which emphasize photojournalism (Northwestern, Western Kentucky, Ohio U., Brooks, etc.) This show was a result of my college reunion in 2003, when a number of classmates urged me to put something together, "being as, you have been to all those places which marked our lives since graduation." Well I haven't been to all of them, but perhaps a few, and with that encouragement, I put together a 52 picture look at the last third of the 20th century. The show will be at the University of Florida this fall, and Southern Oregon University in January. The other show I am working on is called "Too Close" and is based on a series of pictures culled from the last 35 years, all of which are wide, pulled back, general view images, those which emphasize context as a part of content. That show will be in Langon, France in September, and at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts next summer.

Monica Lewinsky sips a Cosmopolitan

PBM: If people want to find out more about the exhibits, where should they look?

Both shows in their initial form, are on my website, www.DavidBurnett.com

PBM: You have truly mastered the art of photojournalism. What is the trick?!

I don't know if I have mastered anything except the right to try and show up at the right time, in hopefully the right place. Technically, I like to approach work in the same way that my colleague Harry Benson once related to me: *"…treat it with contempt…"* by which I think he meant, master what you can, but don't become a slave to technique so that it ends up running you! I agree.

An inquisitive Alan Greenspan at the FED

PBM: You have shot everything from sporting events to politicians. Is there one thing you like to shoot over another? Why?

I love the variety of life, and I know that if I had to do the same thing everyday, I would long ago have quit photography. So, as they say, variety IS the spice of life, and I enjoy the spice that so many different kinds of photography offer me.

PBM: When do you use black and white verses color?

Much as a painter uses all the tools on his palette

PROFILE

NAME: DAVID BURNETT

WEBSITE: WWW.DAVIDBURNETT.COM

FROM: NEW YORK CITY

PHOTOGRAPHY STYLE: PHOTOJOURNALIST/ADVERTISING

YEARS AS PHOTOGRAPHER: 40

EQUIPMENT: CANON 5D & 20D; HOLGA; SPEED GRAPHIC

BURNETT SPEAKS:

"Technically, I like to approach work in the same way that my colleague Harry Benson once related to me: "…treat it with contempt…" by which I think he meant, master what you can, but don't become a slave to technique so that it ends up running you! I agree"

Joe Wilson and wife, former CIA operative Valerie Plame, in their DC home

"I love the variety of life, and I know that if I had to do the same thing everyday, I would long ago have quit photography. So, as they say, variety IS the spice of life, and I enjoy the spice that so many different kinds of photography offer me."

Former paratrooper Bob Williams, who jumped again at Ste. Mere Eglise on 50th anniversary of D-Day

(or at least has the possibility of doing so), I like to make that decision based on what I am looking at. Sure, some stories are color, some black and white and I think in the end you really hope to try and match the emotion of the moment to the capability of the idea about it-whether you use color or black and white. It's not a knee jerk thing: often I find I am wrong about what I thought when I started, and I try to be nimble enough to be able to react to those changes.

PBM: When you take a photograph, are you thinking of any rules (rule of thirds)?

The most important rule to follow in photography is *no* rule. Always challenge rules. Even the one that says take pictures at noon, with the sun over your shoulder. Sometimes it actually *is* the right time and place.

PBM: How heavily do you use Photoshop and for what purposes?

Every now and then I start using a bunch of "filters" and a few of the great capabilities which are built into Photoshop, but for the most part, I am still trying to just get what is out there. As Bullwinkle said: "I paint what I see, and THIS is what I see…"

PBM: How do you get your subjects to give you the perfect pose?

The only perfect pose I have ever seen is by the Flemish painter B. VanderHilst, of 25 members of the Munster Militia celebrating the Peace Treaty of 1648. What a masterpiece of composition. (The painting is in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, and well worth a visit). That is my idea of a great composition. I'm happy, honestly just getting a few people to look natural (in what are usually unnatural situations), and if I get that, I'm very happy. Find the good light; get the people there, and see if letting them be themselves does the trick.

Fu Mingxia, Chinese Gold Medalist diver at Barcelona Olympics

PBM: When you are shooting candied shots of people who know the press is in the room they might act differently. How do you try to get the real side of them?

For the most part you are always a victim of your own presence. The one thing you have to try is to become out of view for the subject. For the most part, it involves just trying to DeEmphasize your own presence. Remembering the story is about the subject, not yourself. I was once described as

Feluccas on the Nile at sunrise

"For the most part you are always a victim of your own presence. The one thing you have to try is to become out of view for the subject. For the most part, it involves just trying to DeEmphasize your own presence. Remembering the story is about the subject, not yourself"

"..this is Dave Burnett; he walks into a room, and disappears…." That was a real compliment.

PBM: As a photojournalist, you could be sent anywhere in the world and sometimes in harms way. How do you deal with the more difficult situations?

Conflict always brings with it difficulties as a photographer. In Baghdad now, you cannot just stroll out and take pictures in the street. (I have not been there, but I am well aware of the situation.) This kind of thing is really one of the great threats to modern life for photographers. We have become part and parcel of the 'enemy' whatever that means, to any number of people who see us as a threat. That said, it is always a cheering experience to meet some folks who just leave you alone and let you do your craft, your art, your work. I prefer to be as unnoticed as possible, though it's often tough to remain completely out of sight. The key is, blend in, don't call attention to yourself. It's cool enough to be a photographer by having good pictures…not necessarily by strutting around with cameras, pretending you're Joe Cool.

A Canadian synchronized swimmer at the LA Olympics

PBM: Have you ever made a really bad mistake on the job?

In 1974 when Willy Brandt, German Chancellor came to Paris following the death of Fr. President Georges Pompidou, he met with Richard Nixon, then the US President, at the US Embassy. I saw Brandt arrive in the evening light, then for a moment he was lit by the TV lights; the look on his face was one of dread, total dread. I shot two frames, beautiful frames. He got out of the car and walked in the Embassy. Then I noticed that instead of shooting at 125 @ f/2.8, my aperture ring had run to the left, and I was at 125 @ f/22. No picture. A week later, Brandt resigned because of a spy scandal. I would have had the picture. But…nothing.

PBM: You have shot in places such as Afghanistan and Iran. Have you ever been threatened or feel your life was at stake?

You can be threatened just about anywhere if things go badly but surely at this point, covering much of the mid-east, and certain areas of Africa are very sketchy. You try and do your job. You do the best you can, using the best sense you have. But you cannot always contemplate when things go bad quickly.

PBM: What do you think are the responsibilities of a photojournalist?

The first thing is to be true to your subject and to the story. You are a vessel, a vehicle to tell that story. Keep it in mind, it's not simply for your own edification that the world is out there. You have to remain on top of your journalistic game to stay sharp and stay focused.

PBM: What was it like shooting a presidential candidate and more specifically, Senator John Kerry?

The Kerry campaign wasn't the first time when I thought, *"Geez, I think I could do a better job of running this campaign than they are."* But that was not my job. He's the candidate. I'm the journalist. I wanted to be as close, as often as I could, but campaigns tend to close up when things get tough, and that in fact is the time they should open up most, and let their people be seen as human. But, you take what you can get, you do the best you can, and perhaps in the end, you have a few pictures which give the true sense of what a campaign is all about.

Burnett following the John Kerry campaign

PBM: Do you have a personal favorite politician that you have photographed? Why?

Tough Question. I liked John Glenn, and Jerry Ford. They were lacking in vanity, and if you could get close to them, you got the real thing.

PBM: If someone wanted to become a photojournalist, what would be your suggestion on how to go about doing so?

"Conflict always brings with it difficulties as a photographer. In Baghdad now, you cannot just stroll out and take pictures in the street. (I have not been there, but I am well aware of the situation.) This kind of thing is really one of the great threats to modern life for photographers. We have become part and parcel of the 'enemy' whatever that means, to any number of people who see us as a threat"

A Phillies hopeful during spring training, Ft. Myers, FL

Atlanta Braves stretching before a spring training

"The first thing is to be true to your subject and to the story. You are a vessel, a vehicle to tell that story. Keep it in mind, it's not simply for your own edification that the world is out there. You have to remain on top of your journalistic game to stay sharp and stay focused."

Like most fields related to the arts or journalism, money is not the thing that drives you. You take pictures because you feel you have to. If you don't' feel that push, that passion, then do something else. Unless you're one of the lucky few, a real living will be far less obvious than the joy you get in making photographs. It's a jungle out there.

Virtual Golf

PBM: What is the one piece of advice you would give to someone following in your footsteps?

Be true to what *you* want to do. Don't listen to others except to hear it, process it, and chew on it. But follow your own ideas. Those will be the best ones.

PBM: Do you have any advice if someone wanted to sell his or her work?

Keep showing it; be relentless, but also be tough on yourself: don't just show a picture because you remember the difficulty you had in making it. No one cares. They only care about the image. Try not to show nonsense. Weed it out. People will thank you for it.

Dewy morning in a golf course

PBM: How important is creating a website for selling work?

These days, it helps to get the images to people in places they will be looking, and if for no other reason than many editors are lazy, it's smart to have some kind of online presence.

PBM: What drove you to this job and what keeps you going?

Having lived through the end of the 'great era of photo journalism,' I am continually trying to find new ways to connect with photography in the new century. For me, much of it has been about the re-discovery which has come with working with 60 year old cameras: slowing things down, and getting that *one* image. At the same time, I love the nifty side of digital, and am constantly amazed at what we can do with the new digital cameras. My real worry is trying to figure out how to make my digital images as secure as my film images (in lockers at my library) using some kind of utilitarian and cost effective way. But in the end, photography is still a great turn on. Nothing competes with the joy of seeing an image happen on your viewfinder, and knowing…well, *thinking* you got it. I love that rush.

PBM: Did you give up anything to go into this field?

I was going to build rockets for NASA, and gave that up to schlep cameras to 75 countries. I think I'm happy with my decision!

Art Schweers on bed

PBM: We always like to ask our photographers if they were stranded on an island with only one piece of photo equipment, what would it be?

Ah, Desert Island Camera store: Well, it would probably be an old Canon P (screw mount, rangefinder 35mm) or a Leica M2, with a normal lens. No battery nothing to charge, nothing to worry about except taking pictures, which would, alas, be difficult since your *one* item was the camera, and presumably it means you don't get any film. Well, at least your pressure plate would see some cool images!

Former Minnesota star Tony Oliva, at Twins spring training in Florida

"I was going to build rockets for NASA, and gave that up to schlep cameras to 75 countries. I think I'm happy with my decision"

PBM: You have seen so much of history from the very front line. Not necessarily as a photographer, but as an American citizen, what have you learned – as a person – being in the room with the movers and shakers of the world and the common man as well?

Underneath a gigantic wet flag, during the 2001 Inaugural, Washington DC

There are times when I wish I could just speak up and tell them what I think. I know that I tend to be a little naïve about the world, and that perhaps I don't really get all the intricacies. Yet, I think I'm pretty smart, have had a lot of real life experience, but the truth is, its rare you can have a one on one with someone in power and tell it like it is. You try and do that with your pictures, but it's a tough problem most of the time. They will almost always have bigger egos than you do. So if you're smart, you learn to just shut up, play along, be yourself, and get the pictures.

PBM: David – Your photographs are inspiring and really extraordinary. It is an honor that you spoke to us. Our sincere thanks.

Thank you for having me.

All photographs are © David Burnett and have been used in the PBase Magazine with his permission.

Ski jump in bronze – 2002 Winter Olympics (a yellow filter meant for B&W film looks good on color)

Waving flag in Omaha beach

[on being asked what he has learned from being with important personalities of the world]:

"There are times when I wish I could just speak up and tell them what I think. I know that I tend to be a little naïve about the world, and that perhaps I don't really get all the intricacies. Yet, I think I'm pretty smart, have had a lot of real life experience, but the truth is, its rare you can have a one on one with someone in power and tell it like it is. You try and do that with your pictures, but it's a tough problem most of the time. They will almost always have bigger egos than you do. So if you're smart, you learn to just shut up, play along, be yourself, and get the pictures"

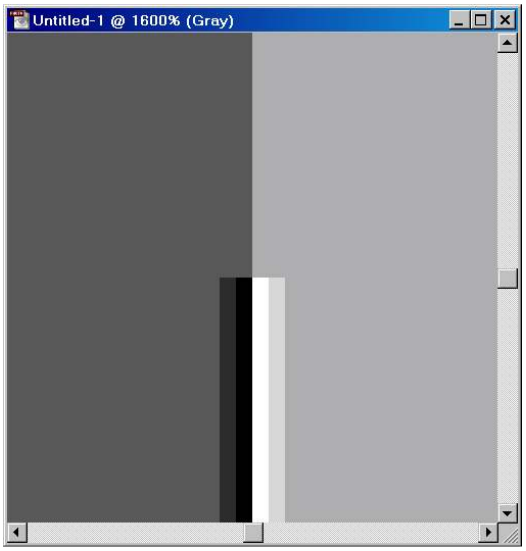
Please email your comments and suggestions to magazine@pbase.com

PHOTOSHOPOGRAPHY: The Art of Sharpening

Ken Crossen is interested in art as a way to nourish the spirit of community. He sees his photography as a way to celebrate his community by reflecting their beauty back to them through his images, and to help others with their artistic projects. Ken studied photography with Harold "Doc" Edgerton, the inventor of strobe photography, and with Minor White.

Ken, his wife, son, and Paul Ford have launched a digital recording project, which publishes the voices of local singers and songwriters that are unrecognized by the commercial music industry (www.communitymusicproject.com). He does CD cover photographs, art, and package design. Ken also does digital prepress photography and image preparation for "coffee table" books of paintings.

Unsharp masking works by finding edges in your image that are steeper than your Threshold setting, and then making those edges even steeper. It makes these edges steeper by adding a small lightening halo to the lighter side of the edge and a small darkening halo to the darker side of the edge. In the sample below, the top half is before sharpening, the bottom half is after sharpening.



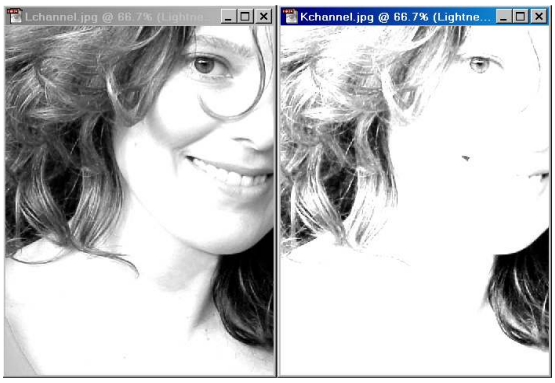
Unsharp masking is a very powerful tool for enhancing image sharpness, but not every feature of every image is improved by sharpening. One obvious example is sharpening image noise, and this is what the Threshold setting on the Unsharp Mask dialog is intended to control. Higher settings will reduce the effect of sharpening on noise. I typically use 20 as my Threshold setting.

Sharpening the chroma information (color as opposed to the luminance information) has two additional important problems. Sharpening directly in RGB tends to introduce color casts in the halos along the edges. In addition, the sharpening effect will be reduced by JPEG compression, which stores the chroma information at a significantly lower resolution compared to the luminance information. Sharpening only in the L channel of L*a*b or the K channel of CMYK avoids both of these problems.

In his book, **Professional Photoshop 6**, Dan Margulis introduces a technique for applying Unsharp Masking exclusively to the K channel. The advantage of the K channel is that, in addition to containing only luminance information, it also contains almost no detail in the midtones or highlights. The detail from hair, eyes, and the important detail of other facial features are all there, but skin detail is conspicuously missing. Sharpening paints a big bull's eye around zits, pits, and wrinkles, making them significantly more prominent. Sharpening in the K channel tends to leave well enough alone when it comes to skin flaws.

If you want to know what will be sharpened in your image, Photoshop can show you — just look at the channels.

Below are the L*a*b L channel (left) and the CMYK K channel (right) of the original image (further below). Note the absence of skin detail in the K channel image.



So if K channel unsharp masking (K channel USM) is so terrific, why not just do that, and be

EXCERPTS:

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"Sharpening the chroma information (color as opposed to the luminance information) has two additional important problems. Sharpening directly in RGB tends to introduce color casts in the halos along the edges. In addition, the sharpening effect will be reduced by JPEG compression"

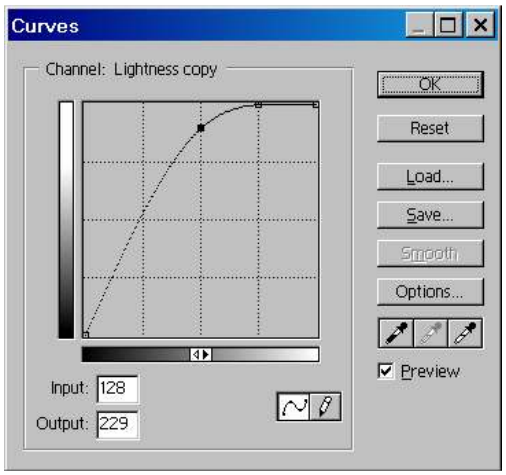
"In his book, Professional Photoshop 6, Dan Margulis introduces a technique for applying Unsharp Masking exclusively to the K channel"

done with it? For starters, you have to convert your image to CMYK, and the Photoshop CMYK conversion can be exceedingly brutal, depending on your image colors. This is not a sadistic Adobe prank, Photoshop is just trying to give you a realistic idea of how your image will actually appear when printed in the CMYK process colors. If you are correcting for prepress, your image will endure this degradation anyway, and in this case K channel USM makes sense.

On the other hand, if your image is destined for the web or most common desktop printers, K channel USM is simply not worth the aggravation and degradation. Fortunately, there is a method which uses the L*a*b L channel to achieve similar sharpening effects without any of the K channel misery. Unfortunately, it's more complicated.

Starting from an RGB image:

1. Convert to L*a*b (from the menus, **Image, Mode, Lab Color**).
2. Select the Lightness channel, and duplicate that channel.
3. Lightness copy is now selected, apply the curve shown below (**Image, Adjust, Curves**).



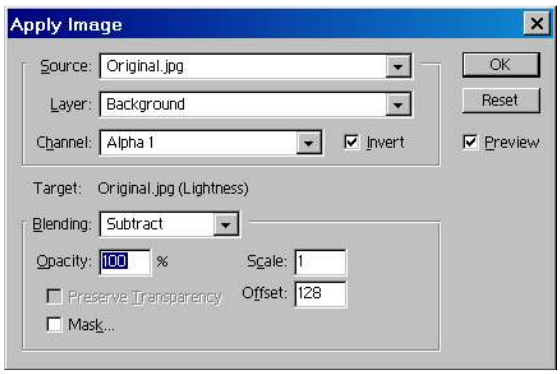
The curve has a point set at Input 128, Output 229, and another point set at Input 191, Output 225. You should now see an L channel that looks a lot like the CMYK K channel.

4. Duplicate Lightness copy (which looks a bit weird), creating Lightness copy 2, which should be selected.
5. Apply Unsharp Masking to Lightness copy 2 (**Filter, Sharpen, Unsharp Mask…**) Amount 500%, Radius 1.5 pixels, and Threshold 20 levels.

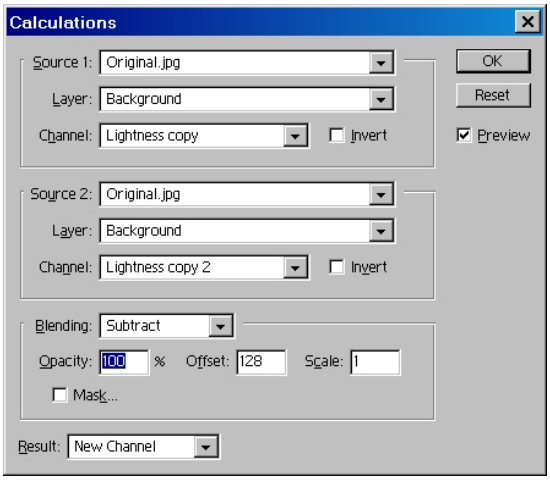
Normally, I wouldn't set an Amount like 500%, this is only for demonstration purposes. Note also that because our Curves operation in step 3 has effectively expanded the shadow contrast, our Threshold setting may need to be set about 80% higher to avoid sharpening the resulting expanded shadow noise.

We want to create a new channel which contains only the sharpening, and nothing else, because we are going to merge this third artificial channel back into our original Lightness channel. Absolutely the only thing we want to take back into our image is the sharpening.

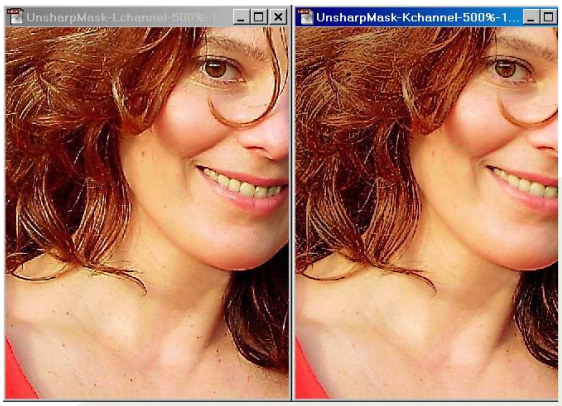
6. **Image, Calculations…** and fill out the dialog as shown below, creating a new channel Alpha 1. This new Alpha 1 channel sets an entirely new standard for weird, but it is only the difference between sharpened and unsharpened. What remains is the sharpening information, and only the sharpening information, just what we wanted.



7. Last step. Select the original Lightness channel, and **Image, Apply Image…**, fill out as below.



That's it, you should have a result similar to the image below right. The image on the left is just straight up L channel USM, just like all the experts, seminars, and books will tell you to do it.



"Photoshop CMYK conversion can be exceedingly brutal, depending on your image colors. This is not a sadistic Adobe prank, Photoshop is just trying to give you a realistic idea of how your image will actually appear when printed in the CMYK process colors. If you are correcting for prepress, your image will endure this degradation anyway, and in this case K channel USM makes sense."

Notice that the “K channel” USM looks better around the mouth and has not emphasized the model’s moles as the L channel USM has done. To my eye, the image on the right is similar in sharpness, but significantly more pleasant in its effect compared to the image on the left.

There are other variations on this technique that can give you even more control over sharpening. For example, suppose there were some small areas for which sharpening is not really working out well. No problem — before the final **Apply Image**, set your foreground color to 129R, 129G, 129B (I would have thought 128, but 129 is what actually worked when I tried it), select the Alpha 1 channel and paint those areas out. The sharpening will leave those painted over areas untouched.

If you are sitting at your computer wondering if I’m nuts, who would go to all that trouble, etc., I don’t blame you.

This is certainly a lot of trouble for one single, seemingly simple step among the many steps required to bring an image to publication standards (where publication could mean anything from posting on an internet site to being printed as a National Geographic cover photograph). The choice really comes down to what kind of investment you are prepared to make in your image.

Some images react badly to this type of treatment, looking extremely weird or unnatural

The original is above, the sharpened version is below.

The problem here is that the image has changed tone dramatically, becoming significantly lighter. Due to the close spacing of the edges, and the generally dark tone, the light halos have become quite prominent. Images of gray buildings and gray metal machine parts have this same problem, even without closely spaced edges.

In the first part of this article, I’ve been describing sharpening methods which assume that you wish to target your sharpening to some specific tonal ranges of your image. If you don’t really care, and just want better control over darkening and lightening halos, there is a simpler method which achieves total control of the halos, but does so over the entire tonal range.

1. Convert to L*a*b mode (**Image, Mode, Lab Color**).
2. Duplicate the Background layer (either from the Layer palette menu or **Layer, Duplicate Layer…**).
3. The Background copy layer should be selected, go to Channels and select the Lightness channel.
4. Apply Unsharp Masking to the Lightness channel (**Filter, Sharpen, Unsharp Mask…**).
5. Convert to RGB mode (**Image, Mode, RGB Color**), important, click **Don’t Flatten**!
6. Make sure Background copy layer is still selected.
7. Duplicate Background copy layer (either from the Layer palette menu or **Layer, Duplicate Layer…**).
8. Set the mode of Background copy to Darken.
9. Set the mode of Background copy 2 to Lighten.

All of the above steps can be put in an Action which will automatically prepare any RGB image for dark/light halo adjustment. This is the fun part that requires judgment. One possible goal is to adjust the Opacity of the darkening layer (Background copy) and the lightening layer (Background copy 2) such that there is minimal change in the overall tone of the image. In other situations, you may deliberately use the halos to emphasize some aspect of the image, bubbles in liquid, or emphasizing the structure of a dragonfly wing, for example. In any case, you now have a greater degree of control over how the edges in your image will appear.

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Returning to the feather image above, I elected to set the lightening Opacity to 8% while setting the darkening Opacity to 70%. Below we have the image after these settings were made.

It's essentially a matter of taste, because there is no way that I know to exactly match the tonal quality over the entire image, except by setting both opacities to 0% (which turns sharpening off).

The image below is essentially what you will get if you use the techniques commonly found in Photoshop how-to books and seminars.

A Million ways to Sharpen: Effective sharpening has always been a hotly debated topic in several photography forums. In addition to Ken's excellent hands-on tutorial, here are just *some* of the additional techniques and commentary for alternate sharpening mechanisms.

This partial list has been extracted from a much more extensive list, maintained by Kent Christiansen and hosted by Ken Leonard here.

Tutorials:
http://ronbigelow.com/articles/sharpen1/sharpen1.htm
http://www.gbbc.org.uk/crh/sharpening.htm
http://www.gbbc.org.uk/crh/sharpeningedges.htm
http://av.adobe.com/russellbrown/SmartSharpenSM.mov
http://www.russellbrown.com/tips_tech.html

Sharpening compared on Retouch:
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4208293

High pass and usm/smart sharpen
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=15516492
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4462367

High Pass sharpening
http://www.dipiwiki.org/tiki/tiki-index.php?page=Higa+Pass+Sharpening
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4449395
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4462367

Vikki's highpass sharpening
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=8177947

Non-destructive sharpening high pass– Michielsen
http://www.michielsen.info/photoshop/hpsharpen/

Bringing out of darkness
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4146127

Sharpening out of focus
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4500117

Feival sharp
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4520005

Convolution kernel
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4638928
http://members.ozemail.com.au/~binaryfx/PSTV_convolcorner.html

Feivel lab mode sharpening
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4660712
http://forums.dpreview.com/forums/read.asp?forum=1006&message=4663130

... click here for more

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TRAVEL: The Woodabe Tribe

Ziva Santop was born in South Africa and immigrated to the United States in 1985. She was inducted into photography while working as a PhotoShop specialist for a Los Angeles Entertainment PR photographer, who recognized her keen eye for composition. Within a few months of shooting, Ziva converted from film to digital and has been shooting digital ever since. Between shooting events like the Emmy Awards, Ziva travels to varied countries to capture the spirit of the diverse cultures (she has traveled to over 30 countries). While in these countries, Ziva often donates her photographic services to non-profit organizations. Ziva is currently working on a coffee table book about her travels to India, Africa and China.

My voyage to Niger (West Africa) was definitely not for the faint of heart and was filled with days of long car rides, drinking hot water (from the heat and lack of ice), sweating like a pig, wearing the same dirty clothes for a couple of days at a time, gazing at the same monotonous duotone landscape, having the same breakfast and lunch every day (from the back of a Toyota Land Cruiser), listening to the same droning music being played in the car for ten days, sleeping in dusty, sandy surroundings, stepping over and on donkey, goat, sheep, cattle and camel dung, driving around in circles in search of nomads and constant dirty hand shaking.

Many days were filled with the yearning for a clean shower, a glass filled with water and lots of ice, an air conditioned house and car, fresh fruit, ice-cream, a clean bed with fresh smelling sheets and pillows and a landscape of mountains, lush greenery and flowers, and yet another glass filled with water and plenty of ice!

However, in spite of all my yearnings I was overflowing with an immense sense of appreciation and freedom. Appreciation for the things that I lacked on this journey (like the ice and air-conditioning). The importance of livestock to these nomads is such, that they would forgo the comforts of a permanent home, clean clothes and material possessions and travel miles just to ensure that their animals are fed, made me be grateful for my life and surroundings even more. But it was the freedom of being out in the open of the African plains, laying on the ground under a mosquito net while falling asleep to the sounds of voices singing in the background and the noises of the goats, camels, sheep, cattle and donkeys communicating with each other that made this trip to Niger worth it.

Traveling for days in the harsh monotonous landscape was making me a little stir crazy. It was the Woodabe people who changed that. They added a softness and color to the surroundings that made it all better.

My introduction to the Woodabe was their "Woodabe greeting" which consisted of them repeating *"fouma, fouma, fouma"*, while holding my hand. This continued for approximately two minutes (they are known for their lengthy greetings).

Since I was not going to be in Niger during the Cure Salee and the Woodabe Gerewol (an annual festival which was scheduled after the rains), as the rains were late this year, *Perodji*, one of the elders of a Woodabe family with whom I was staying, arranged a mini Gerewol for me in the morning.

At 7.30 am the Woodabe young men began dressing up and putting on their make-up using small mirrors. This is a ritual that occurs at their Gerewol. They enter a beauty contest where the women select the most beautiful young Woodabe males. The young men paint their faces a light brown color using a paste made from the Makara stone, which they grind and then mix with milk. They then paint their lips and outline their eyes with black and paint white streaks down their forehead and noses.

The makeup of a Woodabe dancer

In a way I was lucky to have had a private showing as in the main Gerewol only the young men get to enter the contest and not the young boys. Because they were doing this just for me, the young boys were allowed to practice. It was so sweet watching the younger men helping the young boys apply make-up. This was an amazing photo-op for me. Each male has his own way of painting his face and even develops his own sense of style, which he emits by his own individual expression.

After they completed the makeup procedure, they all stood in a straight line (dressed up to the hilt with their hair braided and topped off with ornate headware), the tallest in the middle and the

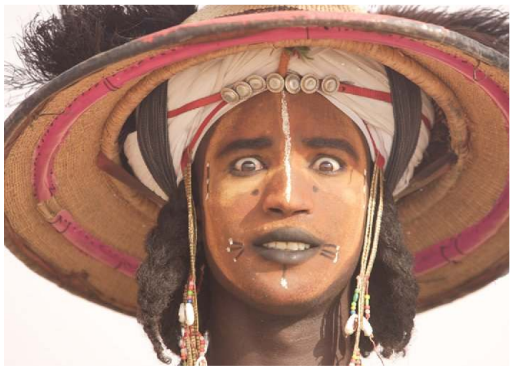
SIDEBAR:

A Woodabe elder

A young Woodabe boy learns the art of makeup

A Woodabe mohawk

shortest (the younger boys) at the end. And so my private showing began. They commenced the ritual (which, at the Gerewol would be the beauty contest, called the Yaake) by loudly humming and rolling their eyes backwards in order to reveal the whites of their eyeballs
.



The Woodabe Eyeroll

Mouths were opened, bearing teeth that looked whiter than normal due to the black paint on their lips (beauty is extremely important to the Woodabe and married couples often select the most beautiful man in the tribe to father a child with the wife).

Since the Woodabe are nomads, they only stay in one location as long as there is enough graze for their livestock. When it is time to depart and move onward, the women breakdown the tents and collect all their belongings and condense everything, which they place on their donkeys. They, along with their kids and belongings, head out on their donkeys to the next stop-over (which lasts as long as there is enough grazing land for their animals).

The Woodabe Livelihood

Upon arrival to their next destination, the women unpack their "bags" and put up their tents. In between each tent, they lay out a table upon which they place all their cooking utensils and wooden bowls. For some unknown reason they also place empty containers that are covered in aluminum foil. These containers serve no purpose except for decoration. While the women prepare the meals (which mainly consist of millet), the men herd their animals to green pastures.

The Woodabe are extremely friendly, affectionate (men often hold hands) and beautiful. They, like most of the nomads are uneducated, but they posses a sense of values. This tribe has respect for their women. Women have the freedom to select their "man". Upon getting married, they do not take on the man's name, if not happy in a marriage, they have the freedom to leave. They can even enjoy sexual freedom before getting married and not be ostracized, shamed or even outcast by their family because of it (unlike most other tribes or families in third world countries).

They have not adopted any religion and have a wonderful set of morals and values. They live for today and do not believe in living in the past nor the future. The young respect and learn from their elders. The elders in turn teach their young by example.
I truly believe we could all learn about the correct way of child rearing and also life from this tribe.

The people of Niger are amongst the poorest and least educated in the world (only 17% of school age children attend school, and the literacy rate is 13.6% with it even lower for women at 6.6%), and even though their surroundings and life is harsh, they remain resilient, stoic and most of all friendly and hospitable. This is what will leave an everlasting impression on me.

Woodabe charm dancers

My sleeping quarters under the African Sky

Desert Tea

The markings of a Woodabe woman

Preparing the Millet

Please email your comments and suggestions to magazine@pbase.com

LEAP OF FAITH: From Passion to Profession

In this article, Greg Davis takes us through an interesting story of his decision to leave a cushy $2000 a week "Corporate America" job to follow his heart and become a photographer.

Greg Davis quit his corporate job in 2004 and spent a year traveling the world. He discovered many things along his path, but one thing in particular, changed the course of his life. Davis uncovered a talent for capturing images that seem to speak to people. Documenting the journey for his own personal enjoyment turned into a budding professional photographic career upon his return to the States. Davis sells his work at art shows, weekend markets and festivals around Texas for now, but has aspirations to grow the business nationally in hopes that it will eventually be able to support him full time. Most of his work can be viewed on his website at www.gregdavisphotography.com , where you can also view his upcoming events. Davis is also in the process of creating a leather bound photo journal that will contain the writings and photographs from his journey.

While rummaging around in my father's liquor cabinet when I was a young boy, I came across a piece of equipment that I had yet to know. There lay an old Canon AE-1, dusty and deprived. I reached passed the wounded soldiers, the half empty bourbon and Scotch bottles, and was introduced to the world of photography.

That same year I joined the high school newspaper as the staff photographer, only being awarded the job because no one else wanted it. I hadn't spent much time with the camera, much less with the chemicals involved in processing the film that awaited me in the darkroom. "I might be in over my head," I began to ponder. My journalism teacher, seeing some of the doubt in my eye, invited the local newspaper photographer to spend time with me in the darkroom that semester and introduce me to this strange new world. The first time I saw the ghostly images begin to appear in the wash, I knew that I was going to be interested in this exciting new world.

Blanket Weaver, Sapa, Vietnam

I was 16 years old then, and as strong of an interest that lay in those chemicals, there was a lifetime of other pursuits running through my mind in those days. I enjoyed hauling the camera out to the Friday Night Football games and shooting some of the on-field action, but my interest lay in the pretty girls on the opposing team's cheerleading and drill team squads. Lucky for me, the camera was just a great excuse to go to the other side to capture some shots of the "action." "Go Lions, Tigers, and Bears, whoever you are!" I thought, "I am going to like this photography gig after all."

I spent the next year locked in the darkroom for an hour a day during journalism class with the prettiest two assistants that I could find from class. It didn't hurt that Jan and Cheryl were also two of the prettiest in all of the school. Again I thought, "I could get used to this photography gig!"

Vang Veng, Laos

As the summer of 1987 approached, a question arose as does in most young peoples' lives when high school graduation looms. "What do I want to do with the rest of my life?" In hindsight, it was completely ridiculous to think that an 18 year old would be able to answer such a question with any confidence. I had just begun to feel comfortable with the camera and was starting to capture photos that were at least good enough to be published in the high school newspaper, so when my father asked me of my post graduation plans, I told him that I had decided that I wanted to go to art school to pursue an education in photography. A proper sound effect here would be the scratching of a needle across vinyl – a favorite vinyl record at that.

Because I would be a fourth generation legacy at Baylor University, I knew where Dad would be recommending that I attend, and it wasn't going to be to an art school. It was then that I quietly tucked the AE-1 back behind the dusty bottles and went on about life as it was expected to be, without a focus

GREG'S JOURNEY:

Ablution Fountains, Istanbul, Turkey

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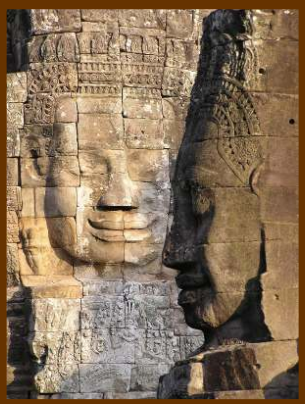

Angkor Wat, Cambodia

on photography. So began my collegiate life at Baylor University's School of Business.

Man in Great Thar Desert, India

Throughout the following years, while on vacations, I would carry a small digital point-and-shoot by my side in order to document my memories as they would pass by. Like everyone else, I would come back with a few shots that would make me dream of the day that I could throw it all away and become a world traveling photographer. And like everyone else, I would have them printed and tucked away in an album only to be brought out once in a blue moon to share those experiences with someone who cared to sit through it all, the poor sap who couldn't say no to my invitation. Looking through someone's vacation or family album might be one of the most boring things one can be forced to do. "This is me at the 'Welcome to Arizona' sign and this is me at the Grand Canyon, and here I am leaving Arizona".

Many years passed in my life without much attention to the world of photography, then in the summer of 2004, I decided to give it all up; my stable job in corporate America and most of my belongings, even my trusted dog, and strike out on an adventure. Traveling around this great big, exciting, lonely, lush, sad, bustling, wondrous, depressing, busy, lavish, friendly, beautiful, intriguing, humorous, spiritual, generous, adaptive, dangerous, creative, sincere, simple, ever changing world of ours had been on my life list of things to do for over a decade. The opportunity to travel around the world presented itself to me; I then evaluated my choices and made the decisions that would ultimately take my life down a very exciting path, one I had always dreamed of. It would be an experience that would always live with me and one that would change my life.

Leading up to my decision, I had spent many of my last waking moments each evening asking God for his help in leading me according to his will. Eventually, things started to fall into place, one after the other; clearly pointing me to follow my heart. I accepted what was laid before me and departed in July of 2004 for a one year, fourteen country circumference of the planet. My mother has always said that prayers can and will be answered if you believe they will. "Mothers are always right you know", at least that is what mine has always told me. In my backpack, along with a few change of clothes and some toiletries, I carried a small laptop and my trusty Olympus C-750 to capture and document memories of my trip, mostly for my own enjoyment.

Prior to departing, I created a website: www.gregdavisphotography.com that allowed my family and friends a direct view into my experience. I made a point to document my journey not only through the lens of my camera but also through the writing of an extensive journal. I think that my inspiration came from knowing that my experiences would be viewed and read by my loved ones as soon as I could sit down at one of the world's growing number of internet cafés and download it all. I would then email everyone letting them know of the recent updates. This process forced me to become much more aware of my surroundings, for I wanted to capture the most intimate experience for those unable to be there with me. All of those little things in life, the things that make life and culture, what it is, began opening themselves to me. I was then able to slow down and open my eyes to those things knowing that they would ultimately be captured, shared and claimed by the imaginations of others through the power of the internet. It was my way of sharing my trip with those I cared for.

In July 2005, a little more than a year after my journey had begun and after visiting the countries of Turkey, South Africa, Mozambique, Swaziland, India, Nepal, Malaysia, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Australia and Fiji, I flew back to America where I picked up my dog Laci, collected my belongings, visited with my family, and shared stories with old friends. I didn't, however, return to the corporate job and cubicle. I wasn't sure exactly in what direction I should head, I just knew that I didn't want to end up in some cubicle somewhere. If I was going to do something forty plus hours a week, I wanted it to be fun this go around.

Boatman on Ganges

It took some time for me to reconnect with the American culture. I felt like an outsider in my own country. I had only been gone for a year, but things seemed different. I guess I was looking at things from a different perspective. People were talking about different things, different political situations, different sitcoms, different issues altogether. Some friends were talking about babies, some were talking about retirement, some just talking to hear their own voice. Of course there was an interest in hearing my stories of where I'd been, and what I'd seen, and who I'd met, but once the "honeymoon" was over and I had told them what they wanted to hear, it was back to their daily routines. I found there to be an overindulgence in everything, a

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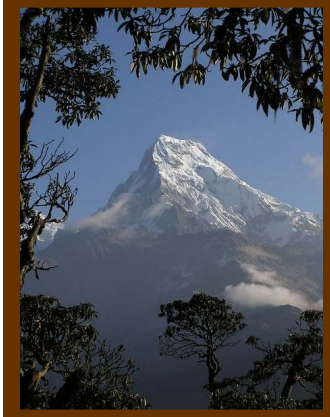


Annapurna, Nepal

"Leading up to my decision, I had spent many of my last waking moments each evening asking God for his help in leading me according to his will. Eventually, things started to fall into place, one after the other; clearly pointing me to follow my heart. I accepted what was laid before me and departed in July of 2004 for a one year, fourteen country circumference of the planet"

Varanasi

strong sense of urgency to retire, an unnecessary focus on material value and an overwhelming preoccupation with the future, which comes from the need to control things that we really have no control over.

Wild Horses, South Africa

Once reality began sinking in and bills started showing up, I realized that I was back and I needed to find work, but what the heck was I going to do? I went out to a local golf course and landed a job driving the golf cart that picks up balls at the driving range. The job sounded good on paper, but after five days of driving in circles and getting golf balls fired at me, I realized that there were just some jobs that I was not born to do. Then when my $130 paycheck showed up the next week, I was convinced that I had made the right decision to leave. $130 a week is a long way from my days working for a technology company bringing in $2,000 a week, but I was willing to be patient, and follow the new path without trying to control it.

Next, I tended bar down in the entertainment district in Austin, Texas. Good for social reintroduction, but bad for the liver. About the time I starting feeling an urge to move on from the bar scene, an old college roommate contacted me and asked me to be the national sales manager for his company, Mental. Mental is a hat company that specializes in headgear for the snowboard and ski market. I started working for Mental in December 2005.

One weekend in December of 2005, I stopped by a local art market in Austin and talked to the man in charge about setting up an exhibit of my photographs from my travels. I told him that I was a photographer and although I hadn't had any formal training, people had been complimenting me on my photographs and I wanted to see if there was a market for them. I knew that my photos were special, but they were just pictures from my journey, nothing I thought I could make a living off of. For $25 a day, the Austin 6th Street Market set me up with a tent and some walls to hang my work and I haven't looked back since. From the very first day out at the market, I have received a tremendous response. People are actually paying me hard earned money for pictures of my vacation! I am well on my way to paying myself back for my trip with my new photography business.

I hope one day to make my photos and journal entries detailing my experience into a coffee-table book to share with those people whose circumstances don't allow for year-long, 14-country trips around the world. I also dream of doing it all again and my trip did just that, it catapulted me into being able to dream again. I blew off the dust of the old me and discovered a hidden talent that lay dormant within me for almost twenty years.

I hope that my story can inspire you to find what lies within you.

My work can be viewed at these upcoming events:

6th Street Art Market, Austin, Texas
Summer Schedule: First Saturday and Sunday of each month 10am. to 6pm.
Spring/Fall Schedule: Every Saturday and Sunday 10am. to 6pm.
http://www.6thstreetmarket.com

Papparotti's - Fort Worth, Texas
Wednesday July 19th, 2006
Following the Premiere of the Film - Nobelity
http://www.papparottis.com
http://www.nobelity.org
http://www.nctms.org

Kerbey Lane Cafe - Austin, Texas
Entire Month of August at the Central Location
http://www.kerbeylanecafe.com

37th Annual Septemberfest - Midland, Texas
Museum of the Southwest
September 8th - 10th, 2006
http://www.museumsw.org

Bayou City Art Festival - Houston, Texas
Downtown on October 14-15, 2006
http://www.bayoucityartfestival.com

East Austin Studio Tour - Austin, Texas
November 18th and 19th from 10am to 5pm
Exhibiting at Iona Handcrafted Books - 701 Tillery St. Studio B
http://www.eastaustinstudiotour.com
http://www.ionahandcraftedbooks.com

Rajasthani Turban, rolled out

"Once reality began sinking in and bills started showing up, I realized that I was back and I needed to find work, but what the heck was I going to do? I went out to a local golf course and landed a job driving the golf cart that picks up balls at the driving range. The job sounded good on paper, but after five days of driving in circles and getting golf balls fired at me, I realized that there were just some jobs that I was not born to do"

Vietnamese boats, hoi an

"For $25 a day, the Austin 6th Street Market set me up with a tent and some walls to hang my work and I haven't looked back since. From the very first day out at the market, I have received a tremendous response. People are actually paying me hard earned money for pictures of my vacation! "

Please email your comments and suggestions to magazine@pbase.com

CULTURE CAULDRON: Australia

Sheila Smart was born in England and has lived in Canada and Papua New Guinea and has lived in Australia for the past thirty years. In the days of film, she used to develop her own black and white in a dark room in Toronto full of chemical smells. The closest she gets to chemicals now is the 220 preservative in her Australian chardonnay on her PC desk top. Her first digital was the little Canon Ixus, followed by the Canon G2. This spurred her to upgrade to a dSLR which was the Canon D60. She now has the Canon 5D plus various L lenses.

Australia is very much a multicultural society. It has embraced both European refugees from World War 2 and in the mid seventies, refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. When the riots occurred at Tiannanamen Square, in Beijing, the then Labor government threw open the doors to 20,000 Chinese students studying in Australia. Sydney has become the melting pot for some very diverse cultures and it has certainly benefited from it.

When my husband and I first came (separately) to Australia in the early seventies, Sydney was a very different place. The most "exotic food" was a Chico roll (I won't go into what is inside a Chico roll for fear up upsetting your appetite!). Steaks and salads were the main fare of the average Australian. Of course, there have been Chinese restaurants for many years before we arrived.

There was a great influx of Chinese into Australia in the 1880s when gold was discovered in the State of Victoria and later, when the Snowy Mountain Hydro Scheme was being built, labourers and tradesmen from Jugoslavia, Italy and other parts of Europe arrived and this brought a more diverse and welcome change to eating habits. Pizza parlours sprung up everywhere, and the local milk bars now served kebabs alongside the Chico roll.

Of course, we do have problems as do many other countries but generally speaking, Aussies are fairly tolerant of newcomers - as long as they like the footie (rugby league) and cheer the Aussies when they are beating the Poms *[ed: 'Pom' seem to be an australian slang for immigrants from the UK]* at the Sydney Cricket Ground - well most of the time! One of my first galleries at PBase was my "multicultural Sydney" and it is one of which I am proud. With one exception (which was an interesting exchange between a Japanese person and myself) the comments are appreciative.

School girls in Islamic Dress

I do sometimes have to defend myself when I take images of Moslem females dressed in the hijab but I have many comments from Moslems, both male and female, who appreciate what they consider my sensitive approach to taking such images.

Australia, of course, has its own indigenous folk, the Australian aborigines. I have a gallery dedicated to these folk here.
Over the past few years, I have become very well known to the aboriginal street performers and occasionally they use my work for their brochures and I print out their business cards all without a fee.

Old Lady in Sepia

Of course, life has changed drastically for the aborigines since the First Fleet arrived under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip in 1788 to colonise the great southern land. According to the Victorian Corporation for Aboriginal Languages:

"Prior to colonisation there were approximately 250 Indigenous languages spoken in Australia (approximately 36 in Victoria). Some of these had several varieties, and there were altogether about 500 language varieties used across Australia. Before settlement Indigenous individuals were capable of speaking five or more languages fluently. Many Australian Indigenous languages have declined to a critical state. More than three-quarters of the original Australian languages have already been lost, and the survival of almost all of the remaining languages are extremely threatened. Linguists differ on the precise numbers of Australian languages that have survived colonisation but it is probably somewhere between 30 and 50. This means that these languages are being lost at a rate of approximately one per year since colonisation".

OYE!

"Australia is very much a multicultural society. It has embraced both European refugees from World War 2 and in the mid seventies, refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos"

Aboriginal with violinist ad

"Of course, we do have problems as do many other countries but generally speaking, Aussies are fairly tolerant of newcomers - as long as they like the footie (rugby league) and cheer the Aussies when they are beating the Poms"

Beauty through the window

All of the street performers I know have "European names" - Russell, Max, and even a Cedric. One of my most photographed subjects was Rodney (who tragically died of a heart attack at the age of 39).

Rodney, up close

So it is no wonder that their languages have almost disappeared as the European influence has taken hold over the past 200 years to the detriment of their unique culture. To the dismay of many Australians, aborigines die at least 30 years earlier than the average non-indigenous person and many aboriginal townships have huge problems with alcoholism and petrol sniffing by its inhabitants. What we do about this has been one of Australia's biggest quandaries and one which we have grappled with, albeit unsuccessfully, for the past 200 years.

On board the First Fleet were approximately 750 convicts from Britain. What is interesting is that many of the convicts elected not to return to Britain after their prison term was completed. Many became landowners and went on to become successful businessmen and even politicians! Hmmm…we won't go there! It is with some pride that Aussies profess to have a convict amongst their ancestors.

So, who is the "average" Australian?

They are Protestant, Catholic, Hindu, Moslem, Buddhist and atheist. Ninety four percent are of European origin, 4.5% Asian and 1.5 aboriginal and islanders. They are every shade under the sun and for the most part, they love sport or love watching it on the telly with a VB in one hand and a meat pie in the other.

Old Man

Cricket, "footie", soccer, swimming and horse racing are some of their favourites.

On the first Tuesday every November, at 3:20 pm, the whole of Australia stops work to watch the Melbourne Cup horse race. The Victorians even have Melbourne Cup Day as a public holiday. The rest of the States head off to the pub clutching their slip from the TAB (a government owned bookie - yes, only in Australia!).

Mark Twain wrote of a visit to the Melbourne Cup in 1895 *"Nowhere in the world have I encountered a festival of people that has such a magnificent appeal to the whole nation. The Cup astonishes me"*. It also astonishes me. In 2005, approximately AU$144 million dollars was wagered at the race course and at TABs across the nation for this one race.

But we are not all cultural misfits! More Australians go to the theatre each year than watch sport. Try getting a ticket to see the Sydney Symphony Orchestra at the Opera House without booking well ahead. Australia has generated nine Nobel Prize winners.

Humour

Australian humour is a lot closer to British humour then American humour. These are a few pieces I have found on the web (I cannot find the original writer so they go unattributed I'm afraid)

1. Its not summer until the steering wheel is too hot to hold.

2. A thong is not a piece of scanty swimwear, as in America, but a fine example of footwear. A group of sheilas wearing black rubber thongs may not be as exciting as you had hoped

3. Historians believe the widespread use of the word "mate" can be traced to the harsh conditions of the Australian frontier in the 1890s and the development of a code of mutual aid, or "mateship". Alternatively, we may all just be really hopeless with names.

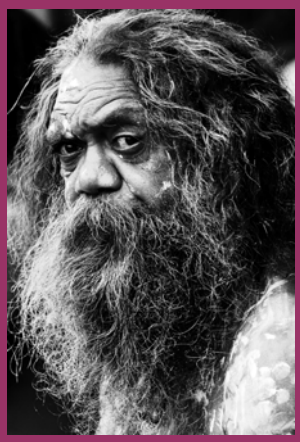
4. The phrase "we've got a great lifestyle" means everyone in the family drinks too much.

5. On picnics, the Esky (cooler) is always too small, creating a food versus grog (alcohol) battle problem that can only ever be resolved by leaving the salad at home.

6. If the guy next to you is swearing like a wharfie, he's probably a media billionaire. Or, just a wharfie.

The place

Australia has a coastline of approx 60,000 kilometres (including islands) so its not surprising that going to the beach is part of its diverse culture. Sydney has around 37 beaches, all within an hour's drive of the nation's largest city.



Cedric

"Australia has a coastline of approx 60,000 kilometres (including islands) so its not surprising that going to the beach is part of its diverse culture. Sydney has around 37 beaches, all within an hour's drive of the nation's largest city."

"To the dismay of many Australians, aborigines die at least 30 years earlier than the average non-indigenous person and many aboriginal townships have huge problems with alcoholism and petrol sniffing by its inhabitants. "

Sunbaking, Aussie Style

Australia has a total of approx 7,000 beachs so with a plethora of beaches and a fairly small population (20 million), one never has any trouble finding a spot for your Esky full of coldies. And that's another thing which always amuses me.

Australian's propensity to shorten everything - an economy of words they call it. Cossies - swimming costumes, Chrissie pressies, posties (mail men), sunnies (sun glasses), pollies (not parrots but politicians and I think they are let off lightly) and the list goes on.

We are a democracy with a preferential voting system. Voting is mandatory.

Drinkers on Australian Day

If it were not mandatory, we would be as apathetic as the North Americans and Poms are. Poms, by the way, is not a derogatory term.

I am an ex-Pom as is my husband. Its just how Australians are. The Australian cricket authorities had to explain to the Pakistan cricket team that the term *Pakis* was just a shortening of Pakistanis, as is the Windies a shortening of the West Indian cricket team. There is no offence meant. Its that economy of language again. We still have, for reasons beyond my understanding, Queen Elizabeth II as our head of state. We had a referendum in 1998 regarding becoming a republic but the question was couched thus:

Do you approve the proposed law to alter the Constitution to establish the Commonwealth of Australia as a republic with the Queen and Governor-General being replaced by a President appointed by a two-thirds majority of the Members of the Commonwealth Parliament?

And, of course, with the Australians' absolute distrust of politicians, they voted against and, of course, the Howard government knew that. What Aussies wanted was to vote for their president, not leave it up to the politicians. I am sure that within the next ten years, Australia will snip the royal apron strings and become a republic.

Girl on Ferry

Surf Race

No Worries !

"Australia has a total of approx 7,000 beachs so with a plethora of beaches and a fairly small population (20 million), one never has any trouble finding a spot for your Esky full of coldies."

"Australians [have a] propensity to shorten everything - an economy of words they call it. Cossies - swimming costumes, Chrissie pressies, posties (mail men), sunnies (sun glasses), pollies (not parrots but politicians and I think they are let off lightly) and the list goes on. "

Man in Hat

THE AURORA HUNTER: Bud Kuenzli

The photographer, Bud Kuenzli is a retired teacher/administrator living in North Pole, Alaska. While photography is now his profession, aurora photography is his passion. After 25 years in Alaska, the Aurora Borealis remains awe-inspiring and worth the effort of driving at all hours of the night to remote locations in sub-zero temperatures. Portraiture and wedding photography are mainstays of his current work, but throughout the winter whenever the Aurora is active, you will find him off a remote mountain road, tripod and camera at the ready.

A background on the Aurora Borealis

On any given night with a clear dark sky, turn an eye toward the North and you may see the subject of my photographic passion – the Northern Lights. If Aurora watching sounds like an interesting hobby but your home town never sees snow you may be out of luck because the Aurora Borealis is rarely seen South of our northern states, and even most Northerners only see the Aurora once or twice a year – unless they are looking for it.

Moonrise over Broad Pass

What's a poor Aurora fan to do? Follow my lead and head up North – way North. North Pole Alaska is where I call home and it lies almost directly beneath the Earth's magnetic field, next door to Fairbanks, Alaska. This far North we see the Aurora Borealis to our South almost as often as we do toward our North.

I think it is safe to say that for as long as humans have viewed the Aurora Borealis, we have been awed, frightened, enthralled, inspired and amazed. If you have never seen the Northern Lights in person, you have missed one of nature's most beautiful displays of light. No rainbow, reflection or other phenomena of light comes close to the beauty and mystery of the Aurora Borealis.

For generation after generation the Aurora was a mystery, but today scientists have a good grasp of the phenomena. The short version of what can be a very long explanation is that the sub-atomic particles that are discharged by the sun, when thrown out in enough quantity and speed, enter our Earth's magnetic field. As these magnetically charged particles are pulled in to the magnetic lines of the earth (hence their display around the North and South magnetic poles) they become energized and in turn energize other atmospheric particles. It is these energized particles that glow. The color and strength of the glow, as well as the movement that often accompanies the light, are determined by a variety of factors including the state of the magnetic field, the energy of the particles and the interaction between the upper atmosphere and the solar particles. It is interesting to note that the Aurora you may view tonight, has a mirror image being displayed in the Southern Hemisphere.

The Passion

My interest in the Northern Lights goes all the way back to the third grade when I wrote my first homework paper on the topic but it wasn't until I moved to Alaska in 1980 as an adult that I had a chance to see this incredible phenomena and I have been enthralled by the beauty of it, as well as the challenge of capturing that beauty, ever since. Aurora photography can be a daunting challenge, particularly in this northern neck of the woods where a mild night might be –20F without considering windchill. I have spent hours outdoors doing aurora photography at –50F. The challenge goes beyond one's choice of fstop and shutter speed. More fundamental challenges like keeping all your fingers and toes flexible are paramount and of no small consequence.

Picture yourself driving to a mountain pass late at night on your way toward a high mountain valley with a nice view northward. In the back of your car is your camera gear. Next to it is your winter survival gear. The wind is blowing and snow drifts are appearing over spots on the road. As you head South you try to keep an eye on your rear mirrors for any signs of Northern Lights. You run through your checklist again in your mind. You have spare batteries for your flashlights and headlamps. Your arctic sleeping bag is there as well as food, water, a lot of extra clothing. Chemical heat packs. Shovel. Chains. All there.

Mountain Silhouette

You know your cell phone is meaningless in these remote mountains. Then your mental exercise is interrupted by a small herd of caribou as they jump

AURORAS GALORE:

Aurora Convolutions

Right Angle Reflections

Curtains over Denali

into your headlights and you hit your brakes. The antlered shadows disappear quickly across the road, fading into the blackness of night and you continue to wind your way up the mountain pass, through wind gusts and snow blown highway till at last you find a nice place with a view Northward. You step out into the cold and turn around. Ahh. There they are. The show begins. The Aurora Borealis has begun to dance across the sky.

Green on Blue – Chenna Lake

First the Preparation…

Preparing for an evening of Northern Lights shooting in the sub-Arctic is a bit more complicated than most winter photography. In remote areas of the far North one must take everything from extra food and water to sleeping bags and shovels to ensure survival if stranded for hours at –30F. Our clothing is bulkier and layered, and one rarely leaves with fewer than three or four pairs of gloves and mitts as well as assorted warm hats. Snowmachine (snowmobile) bibs cover my already layered legs when it is cold. A thermos of coffee is on my critical list, as is toilet paper and my iPod. It is not hard to get 50 to 100 miles from the nearest gas station.

has worked adequately down to –50F (true temperature, no windchill).

… And then the photography

I normally keep a filter on my lenses, but find that I get Newtonian rings on some images with my 16-35 f2.8 lens if I use a filter, so I shoot without a filter when I shoot Aurora. Speaking of lenses and cameras, an FF (Full Frame) camera would be a great thing and I envy anyone with an FF that has a buffer large enough to allow multiple 30 second shots with no waiting between frames. My current Canon MKII lets me shoot without waiting between frames but does have a 1.3 crop factor. Whatever lens you choose, my advice is to use a lens that stops down to f2.8 or faster because common settings for Northern Lights photography vary from 1/8sec f2.8 ISO 400 to 1 min at f2.8/ISO 800 and at times can even go longer. The goal is to always shoot at 30 sec or faster because if you go to 1 min you *will* see star smudges that are too short to look like a nice trail, but too long to look like a sharp star. Going above ISO 800 with most cameras means a pretty grainy image, hence my recommendation for a reasonably fast lens. If your camera can do 15 sec at f2.8 ISO 400 as several high quality non-SLR cameras can, you have a camera that is minimally usable for shooting Aurora, but it may miss the more subtle displays. Stars add a lot to any Aurora image, and stars are best photographed using an open aperture like f2.8 or faster, so I rarely if ever shoot stopped down.

Like snowflakes, no two Aurora are ever exactly the same. There are even times when the aurora is not visible to the naked eye, but may be visible to your

Bent Spruce under dramatic sky

Camera gear needs little prep, but there are some important things to consider. One of the biggest challenges that face winter photographers is battery life. I have a Digital Camera Battery that I can keep in a pocket, but I find being tethered to it to be overly restricting so I opt for simply buying more batteries for my Canon MKII. I purchase dry chemical heat packs and place one in the battery section of my camera bag after I arrive on scene. I have a total of 6 batteries I swap in and out during an evening. When a battery runs dead due to cold, it can be placed in the warm area of the camera bag (kept inside the car) and it will be usable again after its' temperature is back to normal. I use a 3way head on my tripod, along with a leveling base and bubble on the camera for shooting panos. This camera given enough of an exposure. Once, on a high mountain plateau a few hours South of Fairbanks, I stood next to the road wondering if I had driven for two and a half hours for nothing. No hint of an Aurora was even visible. While I waited for some display to develop I decided to play around a bit and make a 10 min exposure across the highway, hoping to capture a truck or car if they might happen by along with a few star streaks in the background. Ten minutes later the exposure was done and shortly thereafter I was able to view the image. I was dumbstruck. I call the resulting image "The Mask". Not only did I capture the car/truck lights as they passed by and a few short star trails, but the Aurora apparently had just enough energy to reflect off some nearby clouds as they gently rolled over the mountains to my North.

SANTA'S TIPS:

(ED: BUD'S ONLINE MONIKER IS SANTA !)

"In remote areas of the far North one must take everything from extra food and water to sleeping bags and shovels to ensure survival if stranded for hours at –30F"

"I normally keep a filter on my lenses, but find that I get Newtonian rings on some images with my 16-35 f2.8 lens if I use a filter, so I shoot without a filter when I shoot Aurora. Speaking of lenses and cameras, an FF (Full Frame) camera would be a great thing and I envy anyone with an FF that has a buffer large enough to allow multiple 30 second shots with no waiting between frames"

The Mask

More recently I have tried to specialize in creating panoramic aurora images. The panoramas I create are generally a series of 4 to 6 images that I hand-stitch in Photoshop. Typically I shoot in a vertical format, with about a 30% overlap. It is true that by the time I take the last image, the aurora will most likely have moved a bit, so my final composition is not a perfect representation of any exact moment in time.

Occasionally the Aurora will move so rapidly that by the time I finish the last shot the resulting series of images cannot be stitched together. Nor can I make each and every star overlap perfectly. A trained astronomer could look at any or my panoramas and point how where this or that star may be out of place. I make no excuses. I just do the best I can do and call it good.

Aurora Calligraphy

If you live near or in a large city it may be impossible to step outside and see an Aurora even

when one is occurring. They are often somewhat faint, and to the majority of people South of Alaska, a rare phenomena. Luckily there are some tricks you can use to get a reasonably good idea if an Aurora is coming your way.

For the Aurora hungry

One of the very best sources of information for non-experts is the map created daily (during the winter) by the University of Alaska, Fairbanks. The web address is http://www.gi.alaska.edu/cgi-bin/predict.cgi but it should be noted that because of our 24hr/day light, the aurora is not visible in the summer this far North and no predictions are made during the summer. The charts and plots at http://www.spacew.com/plots.php may seem a bit confusing at first, but there is a nice summary at the bottom of the page. For those interested in discussions and predictions from other experts and Aurora watchers, http://solar.spacew.com/forum/ is a great web site. A net search will turn up dozens of other resources. Of course pbase is always a superb resource for those who want to find Aurora images or for that matter, images on almost any subject. My personal web site of Aurora images begins at http://www.pbase.com/santa/aurora

At that web site you will also find my personal email. If you find yourself heading far enough North, I'm always happy to shoot with a PBase pal.

Rising Moon

Cinnamon Bun Aurora

God's Eye

The Cat

Winter Picnic

NBC VIDEO-JOURNALIST: Tony Zumbado

Tony Zumbado has worked as a Director of Photography/Cameraman for over 25 years. He is proficient in sound, lighting and editing, and he is President of Zumbado Productions, Inc. in South Florida. Tony is the recipient of nine Emmy's and other television industry awards. His work has been shown on national and international networks including HBO, NBC, ABC, CBS, Disney Channel, Discovery, Court TV, German TV, and BBC. He is periodically asked to conduct seminars on lighting and journalism for the University of Miami and the Suncoast Chapter of the National Television Academy.

PBase Magazine: How do people find you? And how do you get your name out?

Word of mouth. I don't advertise, I don't have a website and I don't really promote myself, other than when I do a job I try to do the best I can and then I tell people, "If you ever need anything else or anybody needs a crew, let me know!" That's how I get work. A lot of people are very aggressive. I don't think I am as aggressive as I should be. I don't know what it is, but I just believe in my work and what I do and then I let it go.

Would you say that NBC is your biggest client?

When it comes to network news NBC *is* my soul client. They always call me when they need me. I have been doing NBC for 30 years. I was actually recruited by NBC about 30 years ago.

How do you define photojournalism?

This is why I feel, I am unique in what I do. I was fortunate to start journalism when it was truly journalism; when the networks would cover stories for the journalism value of it. We would go all over the world, cover it and actually develop the story. We were not sent there with the pretense of, *"This is what we want you to do."* So I've learned what it was to really develop a story that a producer or correspondent pitched to the desk or to the show and then they gave me the okay to go do it.

That's how I learned how to do it. Nowadays, crews and producers and correspondents are told to go somewhere and cover it and "look for this and look for that and take this angle," or that kind of thing. You are very much directed these days. It's not like the old days when you would go and develop it, you would create the whole story and then tell the company what you've got and they would tell you, "Come on back and we will air it."

PBM: Was it better back then or was it just different?

It's different. Back then there were not a lot of outlets for news, so you had more time. And with all due respect to how it is done today – I am not knocking anything – it's just life changes, the ways of covering news changes, just like every other corporation changes. I am not saying that it's good or bad, it's just totally different. Because of the lifestyle of the way that we inform the public today and the way the world has so many different ways of informing. That is why news has changed in the manner that it is gathered.

PBM: How important is it to see a moving image compared to a still image?

I think a moving image really identifies the severances of the situation. A still picture can capture it and, obviously, if you have the one still it can tell a lot of stories. But there is nothing like video when it's done properly and reported properly. It makes a point. It can bring certain attention to the situation. It is very, very clear and doesn't lie. Not to say that pictures lie, but a picture can leave you to a lot of thoughts to what, where, and how bad is it, because it's one still. But when you pan the camera around you can tell how great or how minor this particular story is.

PBM: Can you describe the range of assignments that you have photographed?

I've covered [everything], from a high school being nominated [for excellence] in the nation, to the Pope to assassinations to elections to coups in governments, to wars, earthquakes. Every hellhole in the last 30 years, I've been in. I don't get to cover any of the good news, unfortunately. I am only basically called when there's disasters or hurricanes. I don't get to go to the Olympics or the World Cup. I don't really get the good assignments, as I like to say.

PBM: In lieu of Kimberly Dozier from CBS and her crew (she, thank goodness, is alive and home, but her crew was killed), how far are you willing to go?

It's not how far I am willing to go, it's how far the company wants to cover the story. I don't have a boundary. I truly believe that if we are going to do it right, it's going to take some risk, it's going to take some danger. I could be in Washington, D.C. parking my car, walking across Pennsylvania Avenue to the White House, and I could get run over and killed. I also could be in Baghdad, covering a story, and get killed.

So I don't look at the danger. I don't put myself in situations, but harms way is everywhere (stateside or aboard). So I really don't look at the danger of the story when I go out to work. I'm blessed that I am a faithful man. I believe in God, I pray and I do have inner strength that I get from that, that allows me to be more focused and aware of what I am doing. I just have a way – this goes back to photojournalism – I tend to blend in with the people. I try not to stick out. I try not to be a pompous journalist. I use my camera as a weapon to capture what either side wants me to do. And that's the weapon I use to get in their houses or get the interviews. I am very successful, and I give myself credit, in being able

TONY TELLS:

" I don't advertise, I don't have a website and I don't really promote myself, other than when I do a job I try to do the best I can and then I tell people,'If you ever need anything else or anybody needs a crew, let me know'. That's how I get work."

"I've covered [everything], from a high school being nominated [for excellence] in the nation, to the Pope to assassinations to elections to coups in governments, to wars, earthquakes. Every hellhole in the last 30 years, I've been in. I don't get to cover any of the good news, unfortunately. I am only basically called when there's disasters or hurricanes. I don't get to go the Olympics or the World Cup"

"It's not how far I am willing to go, it's how far the company wants to cover the story. I don't have a boundary. I truly believe that if we are going to do it right, it's going to take some risk, it's going to take some danger"

to fit in, in whatever situation. For that I have been very blessed and lucky nothing has happened. But I have been in the worst situations you could imagine. I am not the greatest camera man, but I have been blessed with being able to communicate with people in dangerous situations and coming out of it okay.

PBM: You were attacked while covering the Elian Gonzales story. What was the story behind that?

Elian was being taken care of by the family [in Miami], but the father, who was in Cuba, requested his return. As it became a bigger story, we camped out in front the [Miami] house, twenty-four seven, to just cover the developments of the story. And the day came where the feds told the family, "We're going to come get him, hell or high water, it is just a matter of time."

There were rumors that the family was going to resist. [Janet] Reno and the Clinton administration decided that they needed to come in with an immigration swat team and take the kid. When that got out, the family said, "Hey look, we're not going to do anything wrong, we're going to let them come in here, but they are going to have to come in here and take him. We don't have any guns."

They invited whatever crew was on watch that day to come inside the house to video tape it, to document the peaceful return of the kid. I happened to be on watch that night and as the SWAT team came in, we saw them. It was 4:00 in the morning and they raided the house from the back, the side, the front. Unfortunately, I was tied up to an umbilical cord to the truck, because the director told us, "Stay hooked up, we will take this live." So that hampered me to get into the house. I was right in front of the door trying to undo all these cables and the door is pried open by the feds and they stampede. They just come in and whatever is in the way gets bulldozed over and I was in the way. I got kicked, I got stomped on, was told to lie down, and not to move. I followed directions and I missed the shot.

PBM: One of the things that you went in front of the camera for was the coverage of New Orleans. What was it like shooting that?

That was a very painful moment and a turning point in that story. *Everybody* knew that if New Orleans was hit with a major Cat 4 or Cat 5 hurricane, it was going to go under water. Being in the media, you tend to sometimes think because everybody knows everything, everything is going to be okay. Especially stateside, everyone would be prepared for this. It turned out that nobody was prepared for it, even though we thought everyone knew.

So when the hurricane hit hard in New Orleans, people scattered and there was no help. When I talk about New Orleans – I am saying in general – it was chaotic, it was every man for himself. Every man, every woman, every child, every senior citizen, had to help each other and fend for themselves. And when these twenty five hundred people ended up being in the convention center for four days, no one knew. That can tell you how chaotic it was. They were going to die of dehydration and no food in four days. These people fled waters that were up to their chins. Their homes were underwater. They busted out of their roofs to make it to this place and they finally make it there, where they thought they were going to get help but there was no-one to help them there. So when we were able to get that video, it was very emotional and it hit home. I felt like I was in an under-developed country, where the government just didn't step up to the plate to take care of the people. That is what it felt like and that is why it hurt so much.
This is not America; this is a bad dream, I need to wake up. I have dreams like this all the time. Since I am a freelancer, I don't work every day so sometimes I wake up thinking I am on a shoot. This felt like a dream. It was really bad. It was very sad; it was very disappointing in many, many ways. I was glad I was able to video tape how it was, so it could never happen again and so our government can now learn that when you think you have things under control, it can turn for the worse.

PBM: Is it true that it was the media down there that really brought the government into action?

We had exclusive video of the convention center. We were the first ones to air that situation. The government was not aware of the situation. We broke the news to Mr. Brown, who was the FEMA director, on the TODAY show and he wasn't aware. It was hours after that when they mobilized busses and the National Guard and food to these people. This is one story that I feel we, NBC, broke and did good to a cause that I was involved in. I felt very good about what we were able to accomplish and we brought a lot of smiles to a lot of people who thought they were going to die four blocks away from their home.

PBM: A lot of your video was very graphic when it was shown, but a lot of it was cut. How do you navigate what should and shouldn't be shown?

We are a public station that is watched by everybody of every age; you need to be careful of what you show, specifically when it can hamper other people.

Every story has an A and a B and a C side – a start, middle and end. I like to say that sometimes we don't have to show the whole process of a person dying to show that someone died. I would not like to see my grandparent or my grandmother being shown on a video when I am in Arkansas in my office when I thought she was being taken care of, when all of a sudden I am looking at my T.V. and seeing my grandparent dying on the sidewalk. That could affect me, my physical condition and other people. So when we didn't show the horrific graphic situation, I felt it was in good taste, because I felt there was enough horrific sanitized situations that were worthy of showing. We didn't have to show the horrific things we were talking about because it was so bad, we would have crossed the line on trying to make our point. I think NBC showed good taste in holding themselves back and having to show

*"But I have been in the worst situations you could imagine….
They just come in and whatever is in the way gets bulldozed over and I was in the way. I got kicked, I got stamped on, was told to lie down, and not to move. I followed directions and I missed the shot."*

[on being asked about his coverage of Hurrican Katrina]

*"That was a very painful moment and a very turning point moment in that story. Everybody knew that if New Orleans was hit with a major Cat 4 or Cat 5 hurricane, it was going to go under water.
…. It turned out that nobody was prepared for it, even though we thought everyone knew"*

"I was glad I was able to video tape how it [Katrina] was, so it could never happen again and so our government can now learn that when you think you have things under control, it can turn for the worse."

these situations and putting other people in harms way. I mean, we saw senior citizens sitting in their wheel chairs full of excreta. Do you need to show that? As opposed to a high shot of that particular senior citizen and saying, "They have been there, left for days, and have not gone to the restroom." I did not need to pan down and show the scene to make a point. I don't think you wanted to see that on the TODAY show.

PBM: There is always the age old story where you see someone in huge trouble and the question is do you photograph that person or save them. How do you react to that question?

I think that it is a fine line that no one can tell you what to do at that situation. When you're deployed to a story, you are not sent as a rescue worker, you are sent as a journalist.

And then, yes, there comes a time when you can save a life and now you have to make a quick decision, on how you are going to handle this because it can affect the rest of your life if you are successful or if you are not successful. It can affect your life, it can affect you family, it can affect the corporation that you're representing and a lot of things can go bad if you are not successful. So it's a judgment call that needs to be made in the moment…with a lot of thought and expertise.

I can never answer that question, till I am in that situation. In my personal situation, with Katrina, I helped because I was able to help. And I felt that there was so much devastation, that it was not going to go away in seconds. The people who were dying in front of me were going to be dead in the next two minutes and I didn't need to be video taping them when they were sitting there foaming from their mouth. I said to them, "Here, have this - giving them some water helped in that situation.

Yes, I rolled on a lot of it, so I could document that. I learned my lesson from Elian [the Elian Gonzales case] . I was called all kinds of things because I missed that shot of Elian ("I fell asleep in the job"…"I messed up"…"I choked"). Everybody criticized me for that. So after that I learned my lesson. It was a wake-up call to always be prepared, always video tape situations and that is the only way people will believe you. I'm hired to video tape and document and if I can help I will help. It's a very personal, individual decision you have to make.

PBM: Would you tell our readers about yourself, and your past?

I'm a refugee from Cuba. I did a little community college and was able to get myself in a photography class. My father was an artist; his passion is oil painting and he created an *eye* in me when I was growing up. When he went off to the art shows, he would take me with him in the summertime, so I wouldn't be out on the street getting in trouble. He would tell me "Set up this artwork here for me…set up this painting over there." And then we would sit around and wait for someone to buy the artwork. So while we sat around, he had a camera. He would say, "Why don't you take a picture of my artwork and take a picture of this and a picture of that so I can create an album and I don't have to take all this artwork the next time?" But what he was really trying to do was get me into photography. What he was really trying to do was correct my work, my framing, my lighting, my composition. And then he would tell me, "Why don't you go around the street and take pictures of people?"

I would bring it back and he would develop it and he would tell me what I did wrong. All of a sudden, I started getting into it and he told me "You know this is something you might want to study." I went to community college and studied photography. Then one day I was in a local television station here in Miami doing a shoot and I went into the studio and one of the directors said, "Hey – listen, while we are doing a video taping, please don't use flash. But while we are videotaping the show, would you like to come to the control room and watch it from there?" I said, "Sure." And as soon I saw what they were doing in there I said, "This is what I want to do!" I just got the bug. At that moment I started talking to the director and I asked, "Is there any way? Is there any entry level? Is there any internship? Is there any way…I will sweep the floors – Whatever, so that I can come back and get into this!"

He had the contacts and he hooked me up with someone who had an internship. I interned for a year and the rest is history!

PBM: Finally, you started in still photography. What have you learned in that craft that has allowed you to be a cameraman?

I learned in still that when you do take that one picture, it has to tell a lot of stories. I shoot my video like that, but I capture the *whole* motion in one event, if you will, as opposed to trying to look for that one picture. So it gave me a better eye when I did video. When I looked through the view finder I looked at the motion going on, but I looked to see if I had that one picture that would tell the story. Every frame I looked at. I composed as one picture, telling a story. I think that's why my videography is different when I shoot it. That's why sometimes I say I know what I shot because of the way I composed it.

Tony Zumbado with his video gear

Listen to Tony Zumbado's audio interview in MP3 format here

"Every story has an A and a B and a C side – a start, middle and end. I like to say that sometimes we don't have to show the whole process of a person dying to show that someone died"

"When you're deployed to a story, you are not sent as a rescue worker, you are sent as a journalist. And then, yes, there comes a time when you can save a life and now you have to make a quick decision on how you are going to handle this because it can affect the rest of your life if you are successful or if you are not successful. It can affect your life, it can affect you family, it can affect the corporation that you're representing and a lot of things can go bad if you are not successful"

Please email your comments and suggestions to magazine@pbase.com

PBASE-CORNER: What's NEW, Doc ?

It's been quite a while since we posted about the latest and greatest features from the PBase folks. For this issue, we asked Molly Jamison, who recently joined the PBase site team to write about new features.

Since I joined the staff of PBase in early May, I've realized what a tight community the site has cultivated as seen through the dedication of a few members to this magazine. In order to keep our customers satisfied and hopefully as enthusiastic as those who contribute to this magazine, we have added many new features to the site in the previous months. In order to stay up to date on additions to PBase, we recommend that you check out the news forum where we post information on current and future additions to the site.

New PBase Staff

Sure we all know that Slug and Emily work for PBase but who else is part of the staff might you ask? Well, PBase has recently hired a few new members that are working to meet all your online photo sharing needs.

Molly (http://www.pbase.com/molly)

As I mentioned before, I recently joined the PBase staff in early May this year. I've been helping Brian with customer support by answering emails and patrolling the forums to answer any questions from users. Also, I've been updating the camera database and building relationships with camera manufacturers so that we will receive information on new cameras as soon as they are released. Finally, I've just started helping out with the PBase magazine.

Brian (http://www.pbase.com/brian)

Brian is in charge of all customer support needs here at PBase. Brian answers emails with any of your questions about PBase or trouble that you are having with the site. In addition, he looks through the forums to answer any other questions that are presented there. Brian recently contributed to the new help pages on PBase and is always thinking of ways to improve customer support for greater customer satisfaction.

Chris (http://www.pbase.com/ctstone)

Chris is a web designer and programmer for PBase. Lately, he has been spending all of his time incorporating Javascript into the site to make it more dynamic. This has allowed us to use a much more fluid voting system that deals with the vote immediately, rather than requiring a page refresh. Also, he has just finished developing slide show functionality for galleries. In the future, Chris plans to start redesigning some of the more cumbersome user interface pages to improve ease-of-use on PBase.

Kathy (http://www.pbase.com/seekathysew)

Kathy is another PBase staff member who helps out with customer support along with Brian and myself. She is responsible for keeping up with emails and forum posts with PBase questions or problems that arise on evenings or weekends. Kathy recently celebrated her one-year anniversary with PBase and continues to play a vital role in comprehensive assistance for our customers.

PBlogs

Since the last issue, PBase has introduced a new gallery template in addition to the original—the PBlog. A PBlog is a special kind of gallery that contains blog entries either with or without an accompanying image. The PBlog template displays image captions, dates, and titles along with the thumbnail (if there is one).
The HTML in the PBlog template was designed so that it is customizable using a stylesheet. This is currently in beta mode, which means that we may make additions or changes to the HTML after we receive some feedback from you. You can find default templates for this new type of gallery at http://www.pbase.com/stylesheets/pblog_template.

Increased Storage Space

Now for the same $23 a year, PBase members enjoy 400MB of storage space, an increase from the previous 300MB. PBase hopes to continue its trend of expanding storage space while maintaining the price.

Enhanced Voting Features

Chris has added a convenient voting feature that eliminates the need to reload pages after you vote for an image or gallery. Instead, the vote link is replaced by a message thanking you for your vote.

Improved Comment Page

Now when a user has more than 50 comments, they will be divided into separate pages of 'newer' and 'older' comments. If you have fewer than 50 comments, they will all appear on one page. Also, Emily recently fixed the comment management page in order to increase speed on these pages. Newest comments are shown first on this page. To see these changes go to http://www.pbase.com/comments.

New Help System

The new searchable help pages are now online at PBase. The search tool is trainable so questions will go directly to their appropriate answer as time goes on. Emily rewrote the help system with topics divided into "Overview", "Instructions", and

MOLLY'S MESSAGE:

"In order to keep our customers satisfied and hopefully as enthusiastic as those who contribute to this magazine, we have added many new features to the site in the previous months. In order to stay up to date on additions to PBase, we recommend that you check out the news forum where we post information on current and future additions to the site"

Summary of notable new features:

- *Blogs*
- *More storage space*
- *Enhanced Voting*
- *Improved Commenting*
- *Statistics*
- *Slideshows*
- *Printing service (closed beta trials as of now)*

"Frequently Asked Questions." Brian has also assisted with the new help pages by writing step-by-step instructions for common tasks on PBase with screenshots. The help system now enables users to email customer support directly with any comments or unanswered questions. Check out the new features on the help pages at http://www.pbase.com/help

PBase Statistics

PBase now offers a summary of your account statistics at http://stats.pbase.com. You can also get there by clicking the "view full statistics" link located on your profile page.

By default, you will see your **aggregate statistics page**. Here, you can see a graph of your total image and gallery daily page views over the past 30 days. On this page, you can also view a list of your 20 most viewed images and galleries in the past 3 days.

On your **Gallery statistics page** you will find a graph of daily page views over the course of the past 30 days and see a list of the top 20 most viewed images and subgalleries of this gallery in the past three days.

The **Image Statistics page** provides a graph of daily page views for a specific image over the past 30 days.

In addition, you can click on any date in the aggregate and gallery graphs to see your 20 most viewed images and galleries for that specific day. Also, if you click on any of the galleries or images listed you can view the stats page for that particular item.

In order to view statistics for any gallery or image, simply click the "view full statistics" link at the bottom of the gallery or image page. Statistics for the current day will be available shortly after the day change on PBase clocks, which are on UTC.

PBase Slideshows

Chris recently added another new feature for users—slideshows. To view gallery contents as a slideshow, simply click on the "slideshow" link at the top right of the screen when viewing a gallery. For now, the slideshow feature is not customizable but we may add this in the future.

PBase Printing Service (upcoming)

This new feature is probably one of the most highly anticipated for PBase users and we hope to have it online in the near future. PBase's upcoming printing service will offer high quality, framed prints of your images.

We are currently offering a closed beta version of the service. In the beginning, printing will only be available for your own photos but we look to expand the service so that users can make their work available for purchase by others.

[note from Arjun: I got lucky and responded to Slug's call for beta-testers early. The print service looks promising]

We at PBase hope that you are enjoying the new features that we've added to the site.

However, we still encourage all users to explore the "Feature Requests" forum where you can post suggestions on how we can further improve the site for you.

PARTING SHOTS

You would notice we have 'Eric the Enthusiastic' doing the editorial this time. He has been working with me for the last few issues and has done an outstanding job of helping out. Specifically, for the last few issues, he has been chasing after busybodies for the pro-photog section and netting them in ! I thought he more than deserves to author the editorial. And for our readers, you must have already figured out that I usually don't have much to write about anyway, besides boring you with news on different fonts that I am trying out.

This time, however, I do have some things to write about !

1st , is that we may be close to launching a priniting service. I am not sure yet, but a few weeks ago, a company contacted us with a proposal for an on-demand printing service. The terms and conditions seem favourable for a voluntary magazine like ours – no minimal commitment of volumes and other things most printers want. The downside, of course, is that the per-issue cost is not going to be as low as what printers can offer you if you make volume commitments, but it's a good start. As we speak, Larena, our PDF specialist is working on some trial runs to see how the print job looks. We will keep you posted about it in our blog.

2nd, Wanda, our model-turned-proof-reader just finished participating in the 'Tour de Cure', which is a nationwide cycling event to benefit the American Diabetes Association. Wanda's own tour de cure sponsor page is here. I am not sure if the donations are still on, since the event has concluded, but take a look anyway. *Ride on, Wanda! Ride on!*

3rd, I *finally* managed to create a formal template for our magazine. This will make future layout of articles much simpler, which brings me to…

4th, one of the ideas that we played with this time was to 'move the magazine' to another country as a test as well as a variety. If you remember, the first time we came out with the magazine, I commented that the magazine was *not* meant to be a centralized and audited effort, run by just one or two people. I strongly believe people rise up to challenges, as long as they are passionate enough.

To that extent, we were pretty close to actually handing off this issue to the UK and you would then have 'PBase Magazine.CO.UK' – the editors and all other staff would be new, based in the UK for this issue. The framework was pretty simple – the new UK editor got to choose his articles and his team. We would be available to them for any support they require (including layout, cover design if needed etc.). As grand as this idea was, it fell through due to some reasons this time, but I have not given up. I plan to make this 'world wide effort' a success. So don't be surprised if you see some future issue come in with a radically new approach ! By the way, the UK just happened to be our first attempt, in no particular order. If you think you have it in you to take this challenge and form a team in your own country, drop us an email ! Do note that you need to form your team and discuss ideas as well – so please don't just say 'I want to do it'. Tell us how. As much as I would like others to step up to the plate, it is also necessary to ensure that you have all the tools and support needed to deliver the quality our readers have come to expect.

5th, Molly Jamison, who has recently joined PBase as an admininstrator has offered her help for future issues – something that we welcome with open arms. Welcome aboard to the most disorganized and ad-hoc editorial team you have ever met, Molly!

Now on to this issue. Eric has already covered the range of articles in his editorial, so I am not going to repeat them. I am personally very excited with the contents of this magazine. As Eric mentioned, it is quite challenging to raise the bar each time. The way I look at it, raising the bar is a subjective conclusion and a hard target to define. Instead, we work towards making each issue a bit better than we started out hoping it would be. If you think we raised the bar in the process, great.

As always my sincere thanks to the contributors to this magazine. It is no joke when I say most of the magazine writes itself.

I hope you have enjoyed this issue.

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Thank you once again for being a part of
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